NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

RESEARCH/RESOURCES MANAGEMENT REPORT AR-9

Land Use in the North Additions of Denali National Park and Preserve: An Historical Perspective

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
Alaska Region

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LAND USE IN THE NORTH ADDITIONS OF DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

by William Schneider, Dianne Gudgel-Holmes and John Dalle-Molle

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Cover photo: Natives with bear spears at Lake Minchumina, 1916. St. John and child, Roosevelt John and Sim William. (From Stephen Foster collection, University of Alaska, Fairbanks)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many past and present residents of the Denali area made this report possible by their help in patiently answering our many questions. They are cited in the text and in the reference sections. We cannot thank them enough.

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INTRODUCTION

This report is presented to the superintendent and staff of Denali National Park and Preserve, in hopes that some of the rich heritage that exists in the north additions of Denali will be conveyed. We have come to recognize that the historical narrative is still unfolding and that the National Park Service (NPS) is a main actor in the drama. As you read about Roosevelt John's homesite, we hope you will in some measure share with Hudson Stuck and Alfred Starr the importance of the site. After reading about the Muddy Lakes, we hope you will want to fly over them in the spring and think of the trappers and look for the beaver houses and muskrat push-ups that have made the area so important and such a potential hotspot for trapping disputes.

Objectives

The overall goal of this project is to provide park managers with information useful in understanding the land uses of the north additions. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) (Public Law 96-487, December 2, 1980) added additions to the former Mount McKinley National Park and changed the name of the entire area to Denali National Park and Preserve. ANILCA mandated many management purposes for the area. Conflicts can develop between some of these purposes and a thorough understanding of past and present uses and concerns is necessary for informed decisions. As management plans are developed, or specific questions or conflicts are presented to managers, the information in this report will, hopefully, assist all interested parties.

Specific objectives are to:

1. Identify and describe current and past subsistence users, activities and processes governing resource allocations.

2. Identify and describe current and past places and areas of importance to local people.

This report is meant to complement the excellent work of Richard Bishop, Subsistence Resource Use in the Proposed North Addition to Mt. McKinley National Park (1978), and Dianne Gudgel-Holmes, Ethnohistory of Four Interior Alaska Waterbodies (1979). The investigations were also coordinated with ongoing resource harvest research by the Subsistence Division of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G); see for example, Stickney (1981) and Stokes (1982).

Our report identifies and describes significant places and trapping areas within and near the northern addition to Denali National Park and Preserve (generally referred to in this report as "the park"). Trapping patterns and use areas were documented because trapping is the major activity over most of

the northern additions for the people in the communities visited, because we felt that trapping, of all the activities, provided the best overall picture of the extent of land use, and because trapping involves the orderly exchange of rights and privileges between individuals, an area of resource allocation that is critically important but poorly understood.

The research approach was historical with a firm commitment to the premise that an understanding of present use patterns is dependent upon recognition of the historical antecedents and the reasons for change. While the approach was historical, every attempt was made to apply the information to present issues. That is, particular sites are discussed in terms of the historical factors which influence present use. Traplines are considered over time to determine (1) how use patterns have changed, (2) the historically critical resource areas, and (3) the environmental, social, legal, and other factors that have influenced the activities of trappers. The approach complements Bishop's discussion of subsistence activities by back-dating and, in certain cases, updating information. The discussion of uses, patterns and sites will provide the NPS with information that can be used in management plans and interpretive programs and will help to ensure that local knowledge is considered. Continued work is necessary to document other sites and understand the users' values and concerns and the processes local people use to resolve resource conflicts.

Methods

Existing literature and personal interviews and correspondence with past and present local people were the basis for identifying significant places in and around the park. Local people also explained why the places are important and why they trap where they do. They also gave their particular concerns about how the land should be managed. Their considerations form the interpretive thread which ties the discussion together.

The project began with a review of the available literature and visits to McGrath, Nikolai and Telida during the summer of 1980. In McGrath, we coordinated with Ernie Holmberg, subregional director of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, and conferred with Ray Collins, linguist and local historian. In Nikolai, we worked closely with Alice Stickney of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Jeff Stokes who was serving as village coordinator at that time, and is now working for the Subsistence Division of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. In the fall of 1980, we travelled to Nenana for interviews and later we continued at Lake Minchumina. In the summers of 1981, 1982 and 1983, several of the sites were visited and we began photographic documentation. In the fall of 1981, we returned to Lake Minchumina and Nikolai to review findings and collect

more specifics. Additional brief visits were later made to Telida and Lake Minchumina. Each village trip lasted from one to five days and was spent mapping traplines and sites, asking about old and contemporary places, and participating in rural Alaskan hospitality. A draft of this report was sent in 1983 to many of the local people who had provided information so they could comment further.

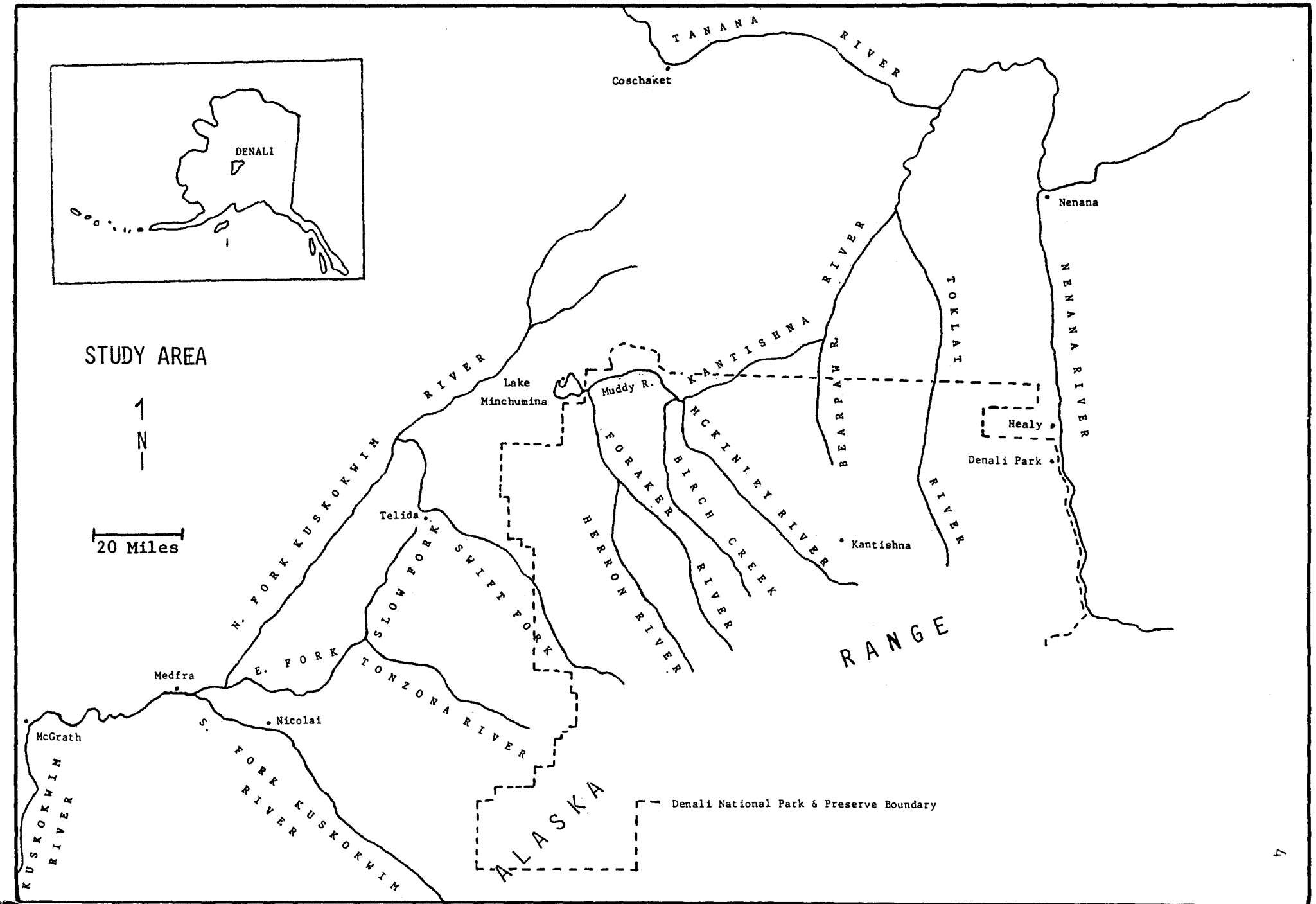
Study Area

The project area covered the north side of the Alaska Range, in and adjacent to the park/preserve (Figure 1). The north additions of Denali encompass two major drainages--the Kuskokwim flowing to the west and the Kantishna to the east. These rivers and their tributaries stretch out like giant fingers across the vast lowlands to the foothills and into the mountains of the Alaska Range. The area extends from the Nenana River on the east to Nikolai Village on the west, and from the Kantishna River on the north to the top of the highest mountain in North America on the south. Consideration of land outside the park is necessary in order to fully understand uses, since local inhabitants do not confine their activities to political boundaries.

Nikolai and Telida are upper Kuskokwim River villages and the people are largely Athabascans. These two villages are part of the McGrath subregion of the Tanana Chiefs Conference and their primary ties are to McGrath. Currently, Nikolai has about 80 residents and Telida about 30. The villages have historical ties to the Lake Minchumina area. Today there are no Natives of local ancestry residing at Lake Minchumina, although there are some Natives, including second-generation ones. Of the approximately 30 people who reside primarily at the lake, some first came as employees of the Civil Aeronautics Agency (CAA), later renamed the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) station. Some people have since retired there. Several residents combine winter trapping with summer wage labor away from the lake.

To the east, Nenana represents a highway, railroad and river transportation and service hub. Some Nenana residents have strong roots in the Kantishna River drainage and a few still trap in the park areas. Further south along state highway 3 (the George Parks' Highway) are the communites of Healy and Denali Park where some residents use portions of the north park additions. In Kantishna, at the end of the Denali National Park road, there are presently two year-round residents with a few dozen in summer engaged in placer mining operations and tourist lodges.

Significant variations are seen in the population groups which use the park additions: Native and non-Native, remote and Railbelt, business people, retirees, government employees, and miners. All depend in various ways and to various degrees on the resources of the north additions.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Nenana
NENANA RIVER
BEARPAW R.
TOKLAT RIVER
KANTISHNA RIVER
Lake Minchumina
Muddy R.
Healy
Denali Park
Kantishna
MCKINLEY RIVER
BIRCH CREEK
FORAKER RIVER
HERRON RIVER
N. FORK KUSKOKWIM RIVER
Telida
SLOW FORK
SWIFT FORK
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Denali National Park & Preserve Boundary

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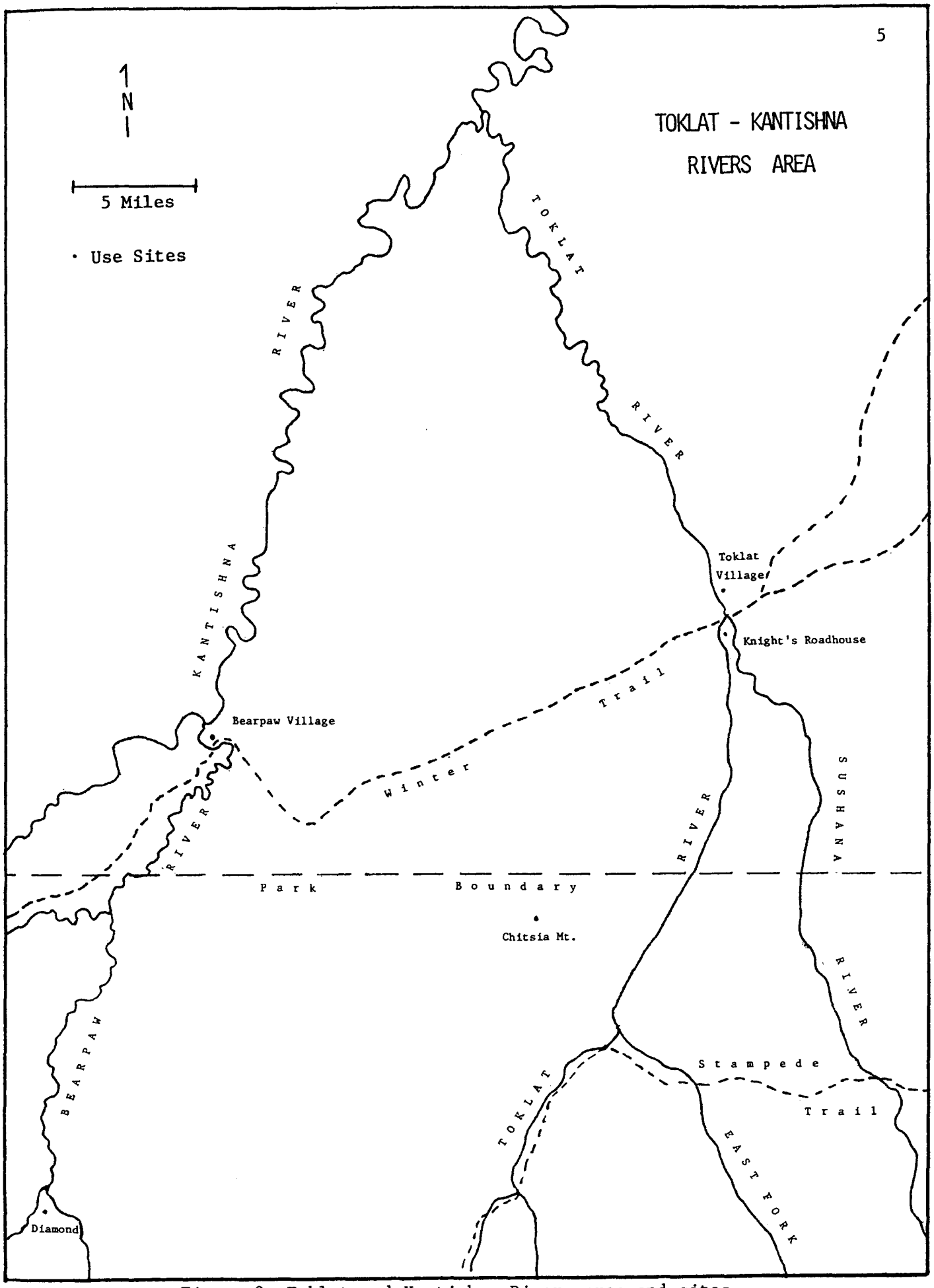

Figure 2. Toklat and Kantishna Rivers area and sites.

Figure 1. Study area - north side of the Alaska Range in and near Denali National Park and Preserve.

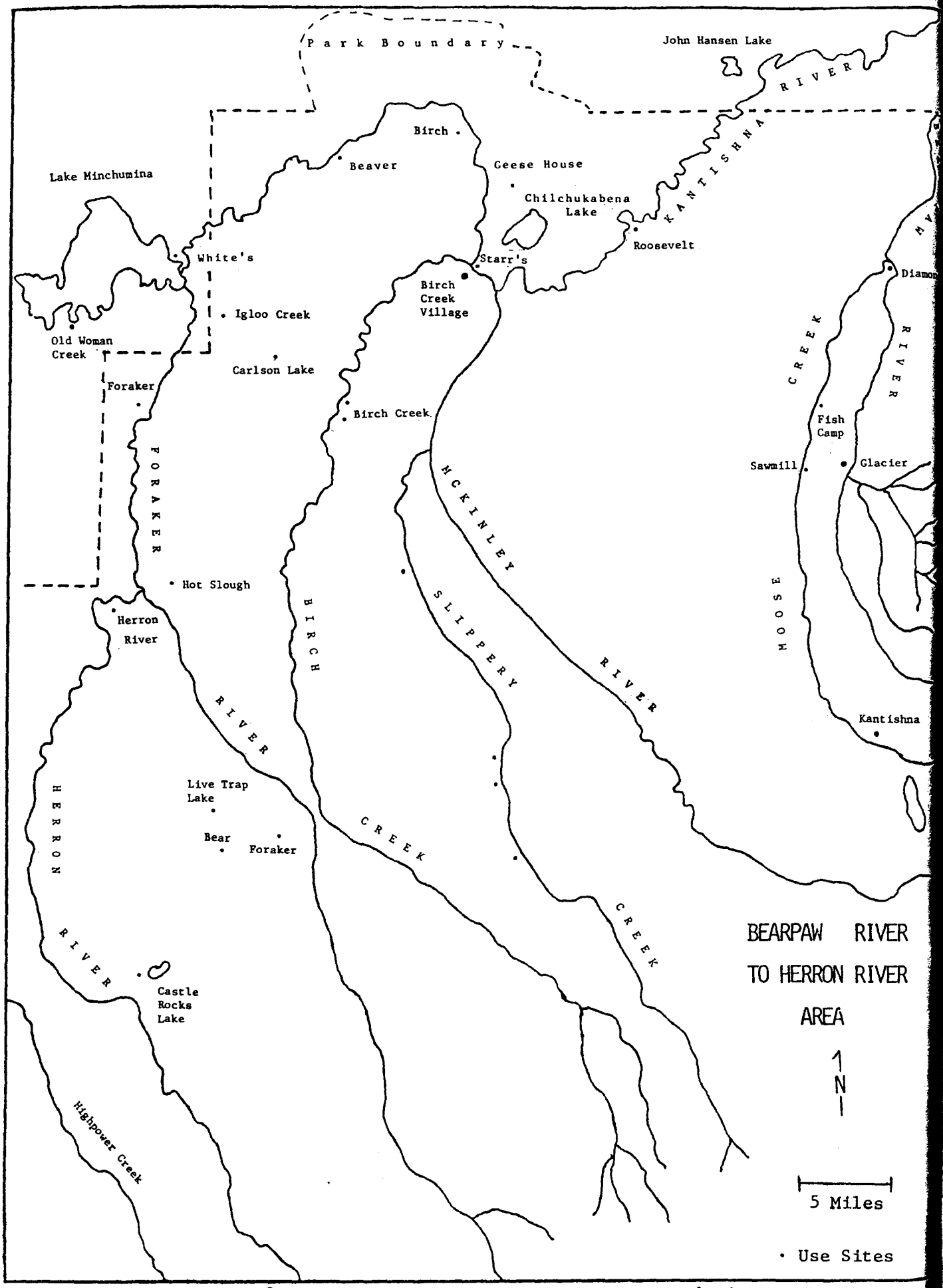

Figure 3. Bearpaw River to Herron River area and sites.

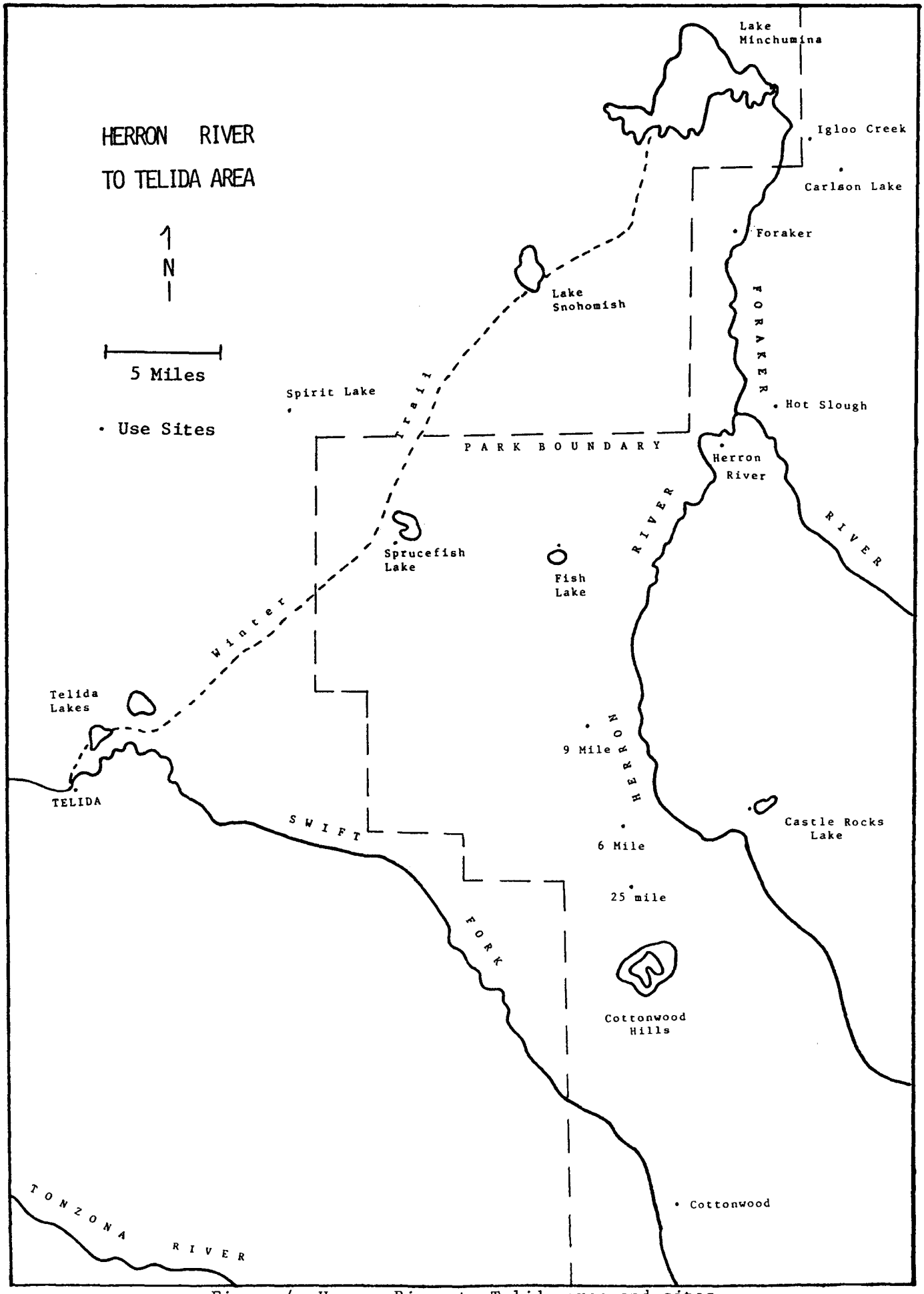

Figure 4. Herron River to Telida area and sites.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The history of the north additions is reflected in the various experiences of the different Native and non-Native groups from the area, including those who settled there, and those who just passed through the region. We start first with the Athabascan Indians whose sustenance was derived from the fish and game of the region and whose oral traditions document variations in game levels and human use of the region. Their old sites and places point to the importance of particular locations and use patterns at different times in the past. The history of the area is also reflected in the record of prospectors who came in search of gold. The remains of old mining sites along Moose, Glacier and other creeks point to the mining heritage of Kantishna, as does the colorful personalities who developed the mining potential there. Others moved through the area along the trails to major mining centers at McGrath, Iditarod and Nome.

Both Native and non-Native populations adapted to major changes, changes in their health, technology, transportation systems, economic opportunities, and the evolution of land management policies. Despite a record of continual adjustment, other themes point to continuity--traditional places continue to play a part in the people's lives, and ceremonial gatherings provide a context for sharing and reaffirming cultural and social ties. Present use patterns of trappers and miners also vividly testify to the continuing values of these activities in the area.

If one trait characterizes the north additions, it is the continuous movement of people into and throughout the drainages. Athabascan-speaking groups shared contiguous, overlapping and continually changing areas of the north flank. Others, like the prospector, the explorer, or the mountain climber, always had their eyes on richer gold strikes, new travel routes or the big climb.

Many different types of sources are referenced in this report but the over-riding emphasis is on the people of the north flank of Denali and their perspectives. The focus is on their responses to the major historical events that shaped their lives and created their opportunities.

Introduction to the Native People

This section begins with a note of caution. Various linguistic and cultural groups make up the Native populations living on the north flank of Denali. The historical roots of these groups point to in-migration, out-migration, intermarriage, dispersions, and consolidation. They are not one people; they are many. Observations made at one point in history cannot be accurately generalized for all time periods.

But historical processes also point to the social and cultural bonds that tied individuals and groups together in networks which stretched out within and beyond the limits of the north flank. One characteristic of the Athabascans, according to Robert McKennan, was "...a cultural continuum carried by a series of interlocking local bands whose microcultures differ in only minor details from those of their immediate neighbors" (McKennan 1969:98). Potlatches provided an important formal mechanism for bringing neighboring groups together. Potlatches were held at Lake Minchumina, Birch Creek, Toklat Village, Coschaket, Nenana and Tanana (the last three on the Tanana River), as well as in the villages of the Kuskokwim drainage. Some potlatches honored the dead (see for instance Bishop 1978:7) and others were feasts that celebrated the abundance of the season (Stuck 1914b:310 and Peterson 1980).

If we had been privileged to visit the Kantishna and Upper Kuskokwim Rivers in the 1870s, perhaps we would have drawn similar conclusions about the settlement patterns and subsistence found by Edward Hosley, an anthropologist. He reconstructed a picture of life at that time based upon the few written sources and the accounts of elders who learned, through oral traditions, about the experiences of their ancestors. Piecing the record together, Hosley (1966a:9) described the hunting areas and the yearly cycle of activities:

> "Individual local groups were customarily identified by some feature of the region they inhabited. Some of these names were: The Munkhotana, dwellers in the region of Lake Minchumina (Gordon 1917:201); Totloratawa, or the dwellers on the Toklat (Toclat), (Jette quoted in Wickersham 1938:233); or Gashnotawa, the people of Salmon River."

Hosley (1966a:36) also said:

> "The seasonal round involved no true village that could be identified as such. Rather, a territory was their home, and the names attached to groups by others reflected this. Usually the name was that of a river or lake about which most of the band's activities centered."

Again from Hosley (1966a:11):

> "The pattern of settlement was that of several bands distributed rather evenly the length of the Kuskokwim drainage, with the seasonal round of a band oriented in a general east-west direction and restricted to the drainage of one or two major streams deriving from the Alaska Range. A band would, in the course of a year, move from winter camps at lakes or streams to favored fishing and hunting grounds upstream in the foothills of the Alaska Range, returning west in the late fall."

Wickersham (1938:223-225) described a band's pattern in the Kantishna drainage:

> "This band of Tena had left their winter-camp on the lower Tanana in the latter days of February for their annual early spring-hunt. A dozen toboggan sleds of Native type and manufacture, ten feet long, constructed of split spruce boards, with high curved bow, corded on each side with moose thongs, carried their supplies and babies. To each toboggan bow half a dozen or more lean and wolfish Indian dogs were hitched, each dog tied by a single cord to a central thong or rope knotted to the sled. A brutal driver had flogged the poor starved beasts along the trail, while the squaws and Olyman siwash had followed on foot.
>
> Nachereah, the moose hunter, shod with heavy snow shoes, had broken trail, and had led the band along the river, across the well known cut-off, through the forest and over the hills. Day after day this sorry cavalcade had struggled towards the head waters of the Kantishna, to the old Toclat camp, which their ancestors had thus visited time out of Tena mind. Hunters scouted the side lines and one lucky day Cheah had killed a moose. The caravan had turned aside to the carcass and remained in camp till they had eaten it. Again they had struggled along the snowy trail, but with renewed strength and happier hearts. Finally they had reached the old site at the mouth of the Toclat where they had camped and prepared for the hunting season.
>
> Now, after a good spring-hunt, they were on their way back to the fish-camps at the junction of the Tanana and the Yukon. The hunt was successful; every one is well fed and a pack of sleek and round-bellied malamutes are tied to near-by trees, howling in joy at the abundant camp fare."

Linguistically, people on the northern and eastern slopes of the range speak a language closely affiliated with the Tanana-Nenana area. In a recent review, Krauss and Golla (1981) spoke of the Upper Kuskokwim language as the predominant language of speakers at Nikolai and Telida, and of the Koyukon language for those formerly at Lake Minchumina and Bearpaw on the Kantishna River. Abbie Joseph, who was interviewed in her Native language for this study, speaks the Minchumina-Birch Creek subdialect of the upper dialect of Koyukon (Krauss 1982). Abbie was born at Birch Creek in the 1890s. The presence of Koyukon language in these places represents a 19th century incursion into an area where upper Kuskokwim dialect and lower Tanana Athabascan speakers at one time were in closer contact (Krauss and Golla 1981:67-91; Kari 1982). The incursion of Koyukon speakers is curious, but not inconsistent with the historic cultural patterns of movement, displacement and settlement.

Two cases are presented to illustrate this point and to emphasize the dangers of applying rigid language lines without adequate references to historic time periods. A recently deceased elder of Nikolai Village recalled that his great-grandfather and great-uncles had historic roots down the river. He told of them fishing at the mouth of the Innoko River. While paddling up, they camped and were attacked by Yukon River people and two brothers were killed. The informant's great-grandfather and his wife, with a small baby, were released and made their way up-river to Nixon Fork and then farther up to the mouth of the Tonzona River where they joined the people whom we now recognize as the residents of the Upper Kuskokwim (Deaphon 1980).

Another account, relayed through oral tradition, tells about some of the historical roots of the village of Telida. Two women from the Kantishna River survived an attack by Yukon River Indians, and fled to the west until they reached Telida Lake where they found good fishing and settled. Their descendants are believed to be part of the current population of the area (Oswalt 1980:81). Charlene Craft, an archeologist, was shown the remains of a house at an old site near "old Telida" that Carl Sesui claimed had been occupied by these women (Craft 1950:15), thus providing a clue as to the antiquity of the move.

Western Contact and Change

By the 1860s many areas in Alaska had been described by explorers and traders, but the north flank of Denali was to remain one of the last areas visited by Euro-Americans. The lower reaches of the Kuskokwim River and the Yukon River both supported trading posts. Russian traders were on the Kuskokwim at Kolmakovaki and seasonally as far up-river as Vinasale and the lower reaches of the Yukon.

Hudson Bay traders were on the Upper Yukon at Fort Yukon and seasonally as far down-river as the Tanana River (see McClellan 1964:5-6 and McKennan 1969:95). Cook Inlet and the lower Susitna was the province of Russian traders.

The Russian and British companies operated in Alaska until the American purchase in 1867 when they were replaced by private traders and the Alaska Commercial Company--the latter establishing a post at Susitna Station on the Susitna River sometime before the turn of the century (Fall 1981:95).

For many years the Athabascans of the north flank had little contact with westerners, yet they were directly affected by foreign trade goods, by the trading policies of trading companies, by neighboring Native groups who operated as middlemen in extensive trading networks, and by diseases that spread into their territory.

Mishka Deaphon (1980) of Nicolai recalled hearing that his great-grandfather was a little boy when the Russians came, but trade goods appeared earlier. Considering traditional travel routes through the Alaska Range, Hosley (1966a:38 and 48) reasoned that the people of the north flank were introduced to western goods by the beginning of the nineteenth century and perhaps earlier (see Fall 1981:202). Hosley (1966a:42) quoted L. Zagoskin, a Russian observer and traveller in the 1840s, as relating that by 1842, the Tanaina Athabascans of Cook Inlet (Kitlaytz) were travelling into the headwaters of the Kuskokwim and had drained off trade from the Russian post of Kolmakov Redoubt on the lower Kuskokwim River by a factor of over one-third. These furs would normally have ended up at Russian trading posts on Cook Inlet but for the special difficulties of the trip. Athabascans of the Upper Kuskokwim River met and traded with the Cook Inlet Athabascans. One site, "Itstsynno," was near present day Medfra (Brown 1980:7). Travelling in late summer, the coastal groups might not return until spring, having spent the whole time in the mountains and north flank trapping and trading. Beaver skins were an especially desired item by coastal groups, for which they traded Russian goods to the Upper Kuskokwim (Fall 1981:75, 207, 208).

When a seasonal Russian trading post was established at Vinasale in the 1850s (Brown 1980:8), it also became a focus for summer gathering and trading. Russian priests travelled to this site after river ice breakup to baptize people. Mishka Deaphon (1981) recounted how people would camp and fish for about a month. Pete Gregory, a resident of Nikolai whose family was from the Vinasale area, recalled his mother mentioning that old Andreanov was the one who baptized the people (Gregory 1980). (The name Andreanov (Andreanoff) appears again in Oswalt (1980:86) who noted that after the purchase of Alaska, the post at Vinasale was run by Reinhold Separe who hired a man named Evan I. Andreanoff.)

The intensified period of trade relations between the Cook Inlet and Upper Kuskokwim Athabascans due to the establishment of Russian posts along the Inlet appears to have decreased in the latter half of the 1800s when the Kuskokwim people recognized the huge profits the Tanaina had been making off them (Fall 1981:279). So, first along traditional trade routes and through middlemen (such as the Tanaina of Cook Inlet) and then by direct contact on the Kuskokwim, the people of the north flank acquired trade goods. A distinguishing feature of these activities is the role of gathering places, their integration in the subsistence cycle, and the extensive area covered by these groups in any given year.

Gathering Places and Use of the Alaska Range

Spring gatherings after the river ice breakup were very important times for people to share news, to feast, and to visit. It was at one of these gatherings that the first moose meat was introduced to the people by a man and his brave sons who killed the moose and determined the meat was good and should be shared with other people (Esai 1980). The importance of sharing new foods at potlatches is also emphasized in a story by Carl Sesui, who recounted that his grandfather gained much prestige by introducing at a potlatch the first tea which he acquired from a Russian mission on the lower Yukon River (Hosley 1966a:44).

Dall sheep and caribou populations were plentiful on the north flank of the Alaska Range at the turn of the century (Brooks 1903:12) and summer/fall hunting in the range also provided opportunities for people to gather together. Far up on the South Fork of the Kuskokwim, at a place called Egypt Mountain, was a spot where people from the Kuskokwim would meet Susitna drainage Athabascans. The Susitna people travelled through Rainy Pass to hunt sheep on the western side of the range because there were no sheep on the eastern side (Deaphon 1980, Esai 1980). In at least one other place, the headwaters of the Yentna River near the crest of the Alaska Range, Natives from south of the Range crossed a low pass and hunted sheep (Beach 1931:90). They used well-known routes and campsites in their fall sheep and caribou hunts and a caribou surround (fence) existed in at least one spot at Happy River near Rainy Pass. Permanent Tanaina settlements may in fact have existed in the Rainy Pass area (Fall 1981:200, 389). Both Mishka Deaphon (1980) and Bobby Esai (1980) recalled their parents meeting Susitna people up toward Rainy Pass. One of Bobby's older sisters was buried near Dillinger Creek (Esai 1980), attesting to their historic travel into the range. Junior Gregory, a resident of Nikolai, recalled that his mother Alexandria Gregory also told about travelling up the South Fork. On one trip she met some girls from the Susitna side who spoke some Russian (J. Gregory 1980).

Summer hunting in the Alaska Range was a well established part of the subsistence cycle until the 1920s or 1930s (Hosley 1966a:69) with only occasional trips in the 1930s and 1940s (Bishop 1978:56). Leaving after the spring gathering, the hunters travelled by canoe part way up the rivers; the South Fork of the Kuskokwim was often used. Spurr (n.d.:59-64), while descending the South Fork in 1898, found signs of sheep hunting, several abandoned camps, a sweat house, two sleds and a camp of 20 Natives. Spurr's map (USGS 1899) shows a village on the South Fork between Egypt Mountain and the East Fork of the Kuskokwim. At various spots, such as the mouth of the Tonzona, the hunters would stop and proceed on foot along summer trails that led into the foothills. Hosley (1966b:97) described these trips:

> "The lightweight birch bark canoes, and virtually all of the band's implements and clothing, would be loaded on toboggans and dogs and the trip made to traditional caribou hunting grounds prior to the breakup of the river ice. Most of these favored hunting areas were in the foothills of the Alaska Range. Others were located at Lake Minchumina and at Lone Star Lake between Telida and Minchumina Lakes, The latter with a caribou lookout station at the top of Telida Mountain."

Further, Hosley (1966b:98) mentioned that Native bands hunted cooperatively and came together in the area from Lake Minchumina to the barren slopes north and west of Mt. McKinley on the Foraker River.

When dog teams increased in use with the coming of prospectors and mail trails, it was advantageous to remain in the lowlands longer in the summer to fish for dog food (R. Collins 1980). Before guns were readily available, the surround or fence was the common method of catching animals. The meat was dried for winter use (Hosley 1966a:65). Brooks (1911:203) in 1902 saw "a brush fence constructed by the Natives for turning moose along a trail where they could be easily killed. With the introduction of modern firearms these game fences, which formerly were an important aid in procuring food supply, are falling into disuse." It is not known if any game fences were located in what is now Denali National Park and Preserve, but Murie (1921) was told of the remains of one located near Knight's Roadhouse, and another at least six miles long was east of Kobi (south of Clear near the Parks Highway). It was made of tripods supporting slender spruce poles tied with willow and with gaps at intervals where a noose was placed to snare moose trying to get through. Hosley (1966a:17) said that the remains of caribou fences might still be visible in the foothills of the Alaska Range. The preferred method of getting the meat back to camps in the lowlands was by canoe or bullboat (a rough framed skin-covered boat (Hosley 1966a:17,18, see also Bishop 1978:56)). Summer hunting trips in the range are still recalled by elders. Mishka Deaphon (1980, 1981) described one trip that he took from the upper reaches of the McKinley Fork (as the Swift Fork of the Kuskokwim is known by many local residents), down along the range as far as Farewell. He returned home via the South Fork of the Kuskokwim.

Kantishna drainage Athabascans also hunted in the foothills and slopes of the Alaska Range (Wickersham 1938:256, 275; Gordon 1917:69). Some hunted up the Foraker River via a well-worn trail leading to the north flank of the Alaska Range (Menke from Bartlett from C. Sesui 1980; Bishop 1978:map; Rand McNally 1922:map). Abbie Joseph (1982) related how her father followed a trail up to the headwaters of the McKinley River-Birch Creek area to hunt sheep. Active hunting also occurred up the Sushana River and in the Hawk Creek areas by Athabascans from

the Toklat River (Esai 1980). Chitsia (Heart) Mountain, west of the Toklat River, was a favored area too (Peterson 1980).

Hunting in the Alaska Range continued to be important until a series of technological and other changes necessitated a shift in subsistence strategy. Small bands of Natives began to settle in more permanent villages along the rivers to make greater use of fish. Fishing technology changed drastically with the introduction of fishwheels which were used on the main rivers (Hosley 1966a:69). The fishwheel enabled people to harvest large amounts of fish, sufficient to feed themselves and their dog teams. Fishwheels were introduced by Anglo-Americans on the lower rivers and Hosley (1966a:66) claimed that by 1918 they were in use by Indians on the upper Kuskokwim. Kantishna drainage groups probably also shifted to the Tanana River for fishing with fishwheels (see McKennan 1969:96), but as late as 1941 one was in use on the Kantishna at the mouth of the Toklat by one of the few remaining Native families in the area (Brooks 1982). Another operated at the mouth of Birch Creek and on the Bearpaw River in the 1930s (Esau, Tape 198). With the advent of miners and extensive trail systems, dog teams became larger and more numerous. Fish came to play an increasingly important role as a source of protein for people and for feeding dogs.

The periods between 1910-1930 (for the upper Kuskokwim) and 1922-1930 (for the Kantishna) were intensive times for employment at roadhouses where some people began selling dry fish to travellers. Increasing dependence on trapping in order to trade for manufactured goods and foods may also have contributed to the decrease in hunting trips to the Alaska Range. Using dog teams to cover large trapping areas meant more time was needed in summer to put up fish for dog food. Another factor that may have reduced hunting in the mountains probably was the series of epidemics which reduced populations and caused people to gather together for mutual assistance (see Epidemics and Relocations, page 17).

Game depletion has been suggested as a cause for Native cessation of regular hunts on the flanks of the Alaska Range in the Denali area by the 1930s. Hosley (1966a:69) speaking specifically of the upper Kuskokwim, stated that the distribution of the repeating rifle caused wholesale slaughters of caribou and the herds were depleted so much after 1932 that people had to shift to a greater reliance on fishing rather than hunting trips to the mountains. Brown (1980:21-22) indicated that market hunting depleted game resources in the upper Kuskokwim in the 1910-1920 period.

After 1900 the north flank was actively hunted by prospectors and people who sold meat to the mining camps at Fairbanks and Kantishna (Capps 1917, Murie 1944:63-4, Bundtzen 1978:154, Karstens 1922 and Pearson 1953:16). Stuck (1915), on February 26, 1915, met two men near Nikolai with heavily laden sleds of

Dall sheep they had killed in the Alaska Range. They were hauling the meat to the mining camps of Takotna and Iditarod. Celia Peterson (1980), who lives in Nenana, recalled that when the railroad was being built, hunters would bring in Dall sheep taken from the Kantishna drainage and sell it to restaurants. Beech (1931:211) also mentioned meat hunting for railroad workers. Some trappers and prospectors fed caribou, sheep and moose to their dogs at least up to the 1940s (Murie 1921b, Bishop 1978:20, Brooker 1984, Kertell 1984, Wright et al. 1933:142). Carey (n.d.,b) quoted Carl Hult: "No caribou for dog feed this fall...I've shot as many as thirty a day on these slopes (Chitsia Mountain) when they were going through." Harry Karstens, the first superintendent of Mount McKinley National Park and an experienced dog sled driver, was so concerned about trappers and prospectors depleting game in the park to feed their dogs that he even listed their names, locations and number of dogs in a report to Washington in order to show the magnitude of the problem. His list included: Gus Wench, trapper on Birch, 5 dogs; Slim Avery, trapper on Foraker, 5 dogs; Slim Carlson, pot hunter, Clearwater, 5 dogs and litter of pups; Smith and Parrar, part-time in park, 10 dogs; Shannon on Slippery next to Birch Creek, 7 dogs and litter of pups; Ed Jern, Toklat, 5 dogs; Walcott, Toklat, 4 dogs; Giles and Knutson, good prospectors, 5 dogs; Nelson and Johnson, 7 dogs; Ellis, west of McKinley, 5 dogs; J. Donnelly, Toklat, 7 dogs; John Anderson, Wonder Lake and Copper Mt., 5 dogs; Grant, Copper Mt., good prospector, 5 dogs; Territorial game warden Burrows, 2 or 3 dogs (Karstens 1924).

However, for the upper Kuskokwim and Kantishna drainage portions of the Alaska Range, it is questionable if serious resource depletion occurred prior to the cessation of regular Native hunts in the Range. Several sources mention wildlife resources for the Alaska Range portion of these drainages. Brooks (1911:204) noted moose in abundance in 1902, and often saw sheep and caribou along the Alaska Range north of the South Fork of the Kuskokwim. In 1903 Wickersham (1938:275) saw many caribou in the Wonder Lake-McLeod Lake area and mentioned recent hunting by Natives. In 1913 Stuck (1914a:19) referred to the same area as "the greatest game country in the world." Sheldon (1930) made many comments on game abundance in the same area of the Alaska Range and its foothills in 1906-08. He noted (Sheldon 1930:74): "Some time ago the Indians abandoned all their trapping grounds on the upper parts of these rivers, and at present even the lower parts of this mountain country remain practically undisturbed. The Indians never hunted the upper reaches, having always found game abundant enough below to satisfy their needs." Capps (1917) recounted a 1916 trip into the proposed Mt. McKinley National Park area and its abundant wildlife. The Nenana News (February 3, 1917) reported that during a 1917 trip into the Kantishna mining district, W. H. Grigg encountered sheep, moose and caribou daily. Beech (1931) marvelled at the great abundance of game in the park area during trips in 1922 and 1924 and encountered two Natives

on the upper Tonzona River in 1925. He also found many Dall sheep, moose and caribou in the upper Tonzona River area in 1925. Brandt (1943:31-32) reported that in 1924 his party fed on caribou at Telida Roadhouse and saw numerous caribou tracks between Telida and the Slow Fork Roadhouse. Although Murie (1935:61) thought that by the 1920s caribou were abundant east of Mount McKinley but not abundant to the west, he estimated there were around 3,000 caribou west of Mount McKinley. Frank Giles and partner trapped and prospected in the upper Swift Fork of the Kuskokwim-Tonzona River area. In April, May and June of 1924, they shot 18 caribou and 3 sheep, saw moose and on June 9, 1924, Giles reported seeing 2,000 caribou on his way to the East Fork of the Kuskokwim (Giles 1924). Skogg (1968:206, 234-240) thought caribou generally abundant on the north side of the Alaska Range for the period from 1900 to 1930. Brown (1980:21-22) cited reports of increasing and relatively large big game populations in the upper Kuskokwim by the late 1920s, before Native hunting trips to the Alaska Range had ceased.

Although it is possible for this large stretch of the Range to have had local shortages of game at times, it does appear that overall game was available, especially to hunters with modern rifles, who were not dependent on group efforts, such as the use of game fences (Hosley 1966a:65). For the Kuskokwim drainage, the shift from seasonal hunting in the Alaska Range to a year-round cycle of activities in the lowlands may also be linked to a greater availability of moose in that area (see Hosley 1966a:47).

Although Native subsistence hunting in the Alaska Range and its foothills is no longer practiced in the northern additions of Denali, individuals recall their personal experiences in these activities and view the areas as part of their hunting territory--areas that they would return to if the need arose.

Epidemics and Relocations

The history of epidemics and consequent relocation of people is a tragic period of history. In the Kantishna drainage, the remains of graveyards at Toklat Village, Birch Creek, Bearpaw and Diamond point to this period. The story is mellowed only by the continuing ties which people maintain with each other and their old home areas. The bulk of our written information about the effects of disease comes from observations of travellers at the turn of the century and later, at a time when there had already been considerable depopulation and relocation but at a time when survivors still maintained extensive contact with the Tanana, Coschaket and Nenana areas.

A major smallpox epidemic, coming from California, hit southeast Alaska in 1836 and spread to Kodiak and other coastal villages before raging through the interior a few years later. Vaccine was available and vaccination compulsory in limited

areas of Alaska under Russian control, but those who could not or would not be vaccinated (such as Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound and Bristol Bay) lost from 40 to 60% of their population. One observer estimated 3,000 Natives (in Southeast) died before vaccination controlled the disease (Aronson 1940:29). Another estimated 4,000 out of 10,000 died from Kaigan to Yakutat (deLaguna 1972:117). Few explorers, however, had ventured to the interior at that time, so the record of mortality is unknown.

After the turn of the century, when explorers and gold seekers became more frequent in the Kantishna and upper Kuskokwim drainages, the Native population was already severely reduced. Yet diseases continued to take their toll and by the late 1920s places such as Minchumina were almost void of Athabascans largely due to diseases (Bishop 1978:8). Commenting on his observations from a 1911 visit to Lake Minchumina, Stuck (1914b:307-8) stated: "The Minchumina people are a very feeble folk, some sixteen all told at the time of our visit, greatly reduced by the epidemics of the last decade, living remote from all others on the verge of their race's habitat. They trade chiefly at Tanana, a hundred and thirty miles or so away, walking an annual trip thither with their furs...The measles in 1900 slew most of them, and diphtheria in 1906 destroyed all the children and many of the adults that remained." Influenza in 1920, 1923 and 1930, along with hideous forms of tuberculosis, further depleted the region of Natives (Aronson 1940:31; Brooker 1984; Hosley 1966a:11; Nenana News May 31, 1923, Oswalt 1980:13). The epidemic about 1920 is often mentioned by older people.

Hosley (1966b:170) mentioned that in the 1900-1910 period Birch Creek Village was severly decimated. Percy Duyck (1982) described a burial site along the Bearpaw River north of Diamond where victims of a flu outbreak in the early 1920s are buried, including his father's first wife. Percy also recalled his dad digging graves up the Toklat River near the salmon spawning area (Knight's Roadhouse). Both he and Celia Peterson (1980) stated that at the time of one epidemic some residents of the Kantishna River area were removed to the new railroad line at Rex and taken by train to Nenana for burial. An epidemic in the spring of 1923 at Birch Creek left dozens of people dead. Not only was the Birch Creek population reduced to one or two families, but Coschaket suffered nearly the same fate because many families had gone to Birch Creek for spring muskrat hunting. Eli Charlie (1983) and Lee Edwin (1983) were boys at this time and recall the great number of dead, including Eli's mother. Many people were buried at Birch Creek cemetery, while others were subsequently removed to Coschaket by boat for final burial. An interesting observation was made by Eli that only people above the age of 15 became ill. As late as 1940, measles wiped out the whole village at Healy Lake near Delta Junction. A measles epidemic the same year on the Kuskokwim reached at least as far upriver as the Stoney River

Hendrickson 1982). This epidemic may have touched some of the last few Natives on the Kantishna River also.

Explorers, Prospectors and Trail Development

The people of the upper Kuskokwim and Kantishna drainages had no sustained direct contact with westerners in their homeland until toward the turn of the century, except for Russian and American fur traders and an occasional Russian Orthodox priest. Scattered accounts mention early prospectors such as the legendary Frank Densmore, Al King, and Henry Davis in 1889 traversing the Minchumina-Kuskokwim portage after poling up the Kantishna River. But their brief Native contacts are not described. However, in 1898 the situation changed when Spurr and Post conducted the first scientific exploration into the region (Spurr 1900). The U.S. Geological Survey sent the men on a geological reconnaissance from Cook Inlet across the Alaska Range and down the Kuskokwim River via the South Fork.

The next year the Army sent Joseph Herron and party in search of an overland route from Cook Inlet to the Tanana River. Unlike previous or subsequent expeditions, Herron had a lengthy and unexpected contact with the local Natives (Herron 1901). He became lost in the broad lowlands of the upper Kuskokwim and was rescued by Chief Sesui. The people of Telida assisted Herron, provided food, prepared winter clothing for his men and directed them to Ft. Gibbon on the Tanana. (See discussion of Telida for more detail on the rescue.) Two significant points bear repeating. By 1900 there had been years of indirect contact with westerners. Direct contact was limited but the Telida people were familiar with many aspects of the white man. They were able to assist Herron to Tanana because they had, in all likelihood, been there to potlatch; also they probably had relatives there and travelled there in the course of their hunting and trading excursions.

Less than ten years after Herron's expedition a steady stream of travellers entered the north flank of the Denali area. The discovery of gold in Nome in 1898 and in Fairbanks in 1902 attracted large numbers of prospectors to those areas. Unsuccessful prospectors who followed the strikes spread out over the countryside in search of their own discovery. Two such prospectors were Joe Quigley and Jack Horn, who are credited with the discovery of paying quantities of gold on Glacier Creek in the Kantishna region in the summer of 1905 which resulted in a stampede to Kantishna (Capps 1918:291). Before long, several thousand prospectors converged on the Kantishna Hills. But the easily accessible, shallow diggings were limited to a few creeks and by the spring of 1906 most of the prospectors had moved on (Capps 1918:292). A few managed to hang on, as Capps reported: "...of the 36 people in the district during the summer of 1916 over half came to this camp during the first two years after its discovery..." (Capps 1919:17).

Gold discoveries between 1906-08 at Ganes Creek and Ophir in the Innoko drainage also attracted prospectors, some of whom then extended their search into the upper Kuskokwim region (Oswalt 1980:14).

The need for a winter overland route to the interior gold fields led in 1908 to a reconnaissance by the Alaska Road Commission on a trail known as the Iditarod, which was built two years later (Oswalt 1980:14). The trail ran from the port of Seward through Rainy Pass to McGrath and Nome.

To accommodate travellers on the various trails, roadhouses were built a day's journey apart. They provided room and board for travellers and care for their dog teams. Roadhouses in the Denali area on the trail from Nenana to McGrath were listed in the Kusko Times, June 15, 1929, as:

Location	Mile
Nenana	0
Tavern RH	17 1/2
Knights RH	23 1/2
19 Mile	58
Diamond RH	76
Roosevelt	89
L. Minchumina	115
Trapper's Cabin	132
Lonestar RH	150
Telida RH	169 1/2
Slow Fork RH	187
East Fork RH	206
Berry's Landing RH	227 1/2
Big River RH	241
McGrath	263

Part of this trail was in regular use by non-Natives by at least 1913 when Stuck travelled it and stayed at Knight's, which he noted was a "comfortable road-house and ranch on the Toklat, the only road-house this trail can now support..." (Stuck 1914a:14). By 1917 active cutting of a "road" was underway as Thomas Lloyd, of the 1910 Sourdough climb of Mt. McKinley, was employed with a $4,000 allotment (Nenana News January 20, 1917).

The Minchumina Portage was another Native route followed by explorers, miners and mail carriers, and eventually Caterpillar tractors.

The roadhouses, with their stream of travellers, provided one of the first opportunities for direct contact between the Natives and the newcomers. Mishka Deaphon (1980) recalled hearing that the first "white guys" who came over the government trail (Iditarod Trail) from Salmon River taught his

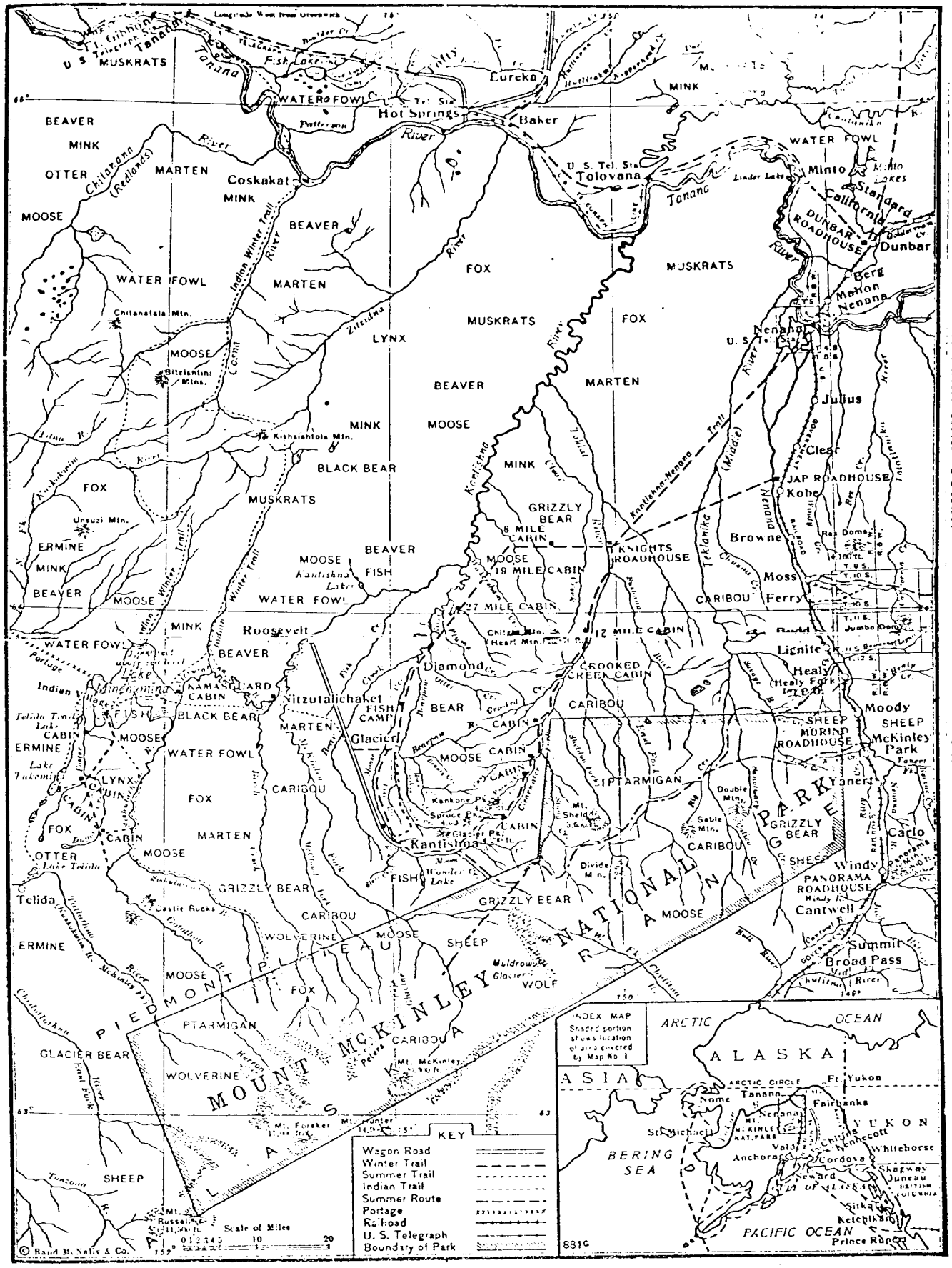

Figure 5. The Denali area in 1922. From the Rand McNally Guide to Alaska and Yukon. Stephen Foster of Lake Minchumina was a prime source to this guide.

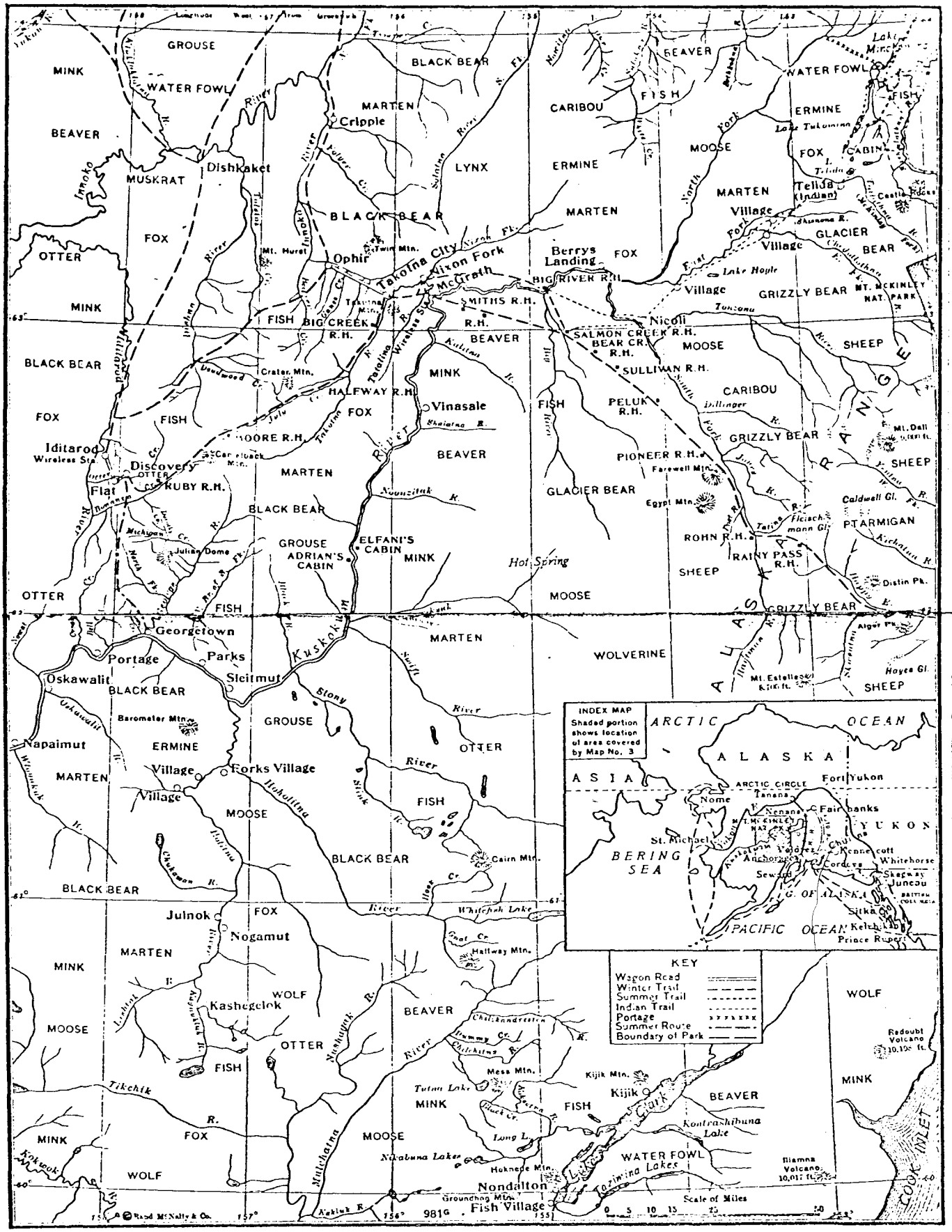

Figure 6. West of Denali in 1922. From the Rand McNally Guide to Alaska and Yukon.

uncle a bit of writing. Unlike the situation in other areas of Alaska, the roadhouses were developed near and sometimes at Native camps, and in some cases were run by Natives. Natives also occasionally supplied roadhouses with fresh game. It is unclear whether the placement of roadhouses was due to the enterprising nature of the people or, as in the case of the Iditarod Trail, to the planning of W. L. Goodwin. Goodwin was hired by the Alaska Road Commission to survey and blaze the Iditarod Trail and one of his charges was to locate sites for roadhouses. The extent of his involvement with local people remains unclear (Smith 1974:38).

Chief Sesui's son, Carl Sesui, raised dog teams to carry the mail along the Nenana-McGrath trail (Granroth 1980). Hosley (1966a:65) reported that the roadhouses at Telida and Lone Star Lake (Sprucefish Lake) were established by Natives. Alfred Starr (1980) stated that his father-in-law, Roosevelt John, ran a roadhouse at Birch Creek on the same McGrath-Nenana trail (also see Telida, Sprucefish, Birch Creek Village, and Roosevelt John's Native allotment in this report).

Years of indirect contact with westerners must have prepared the people of the north flank to take advantage of the economic opportunities which developed so quickly during the first quarter of the century.

Years later tractors were taken to McGrath to assist in the completion of a major airstrip, the support system for the airplane which had replaced the dog teams and roadhouses. Despite changes in technology (tractors and airplanes) traditional knowledge of the travel routes was important to the efficient building of the new air support system. Strangely enough, early air routes often followed Native trails such as was the case between Nenana and McGrath (Westover 1983).

The Airplane and New Support Systems

Mishka Deaphon was on a hunting trip up by Telida back in 1924 when he heard what he described as a "rattling up in the sky by Fairbanks." That was Ben Eielson and Ed Young (Deaphon 1980). They were on the first, or one of the first, experimental airplane mail delivery flights under contract from the Post Office Department (Brown 1980:100). The airplane that Mishka saw signalled the inevitable end to dog team mail delivery, the extensive overland trail system, the numerous roadhouses which provided seasonal employment for many people, and the end of a stream of travellers through the country. These changes took place around 1930 when the Post Office finally contracted for permanent airmail delivery (Brown 1980:89). Percy Duyck, who traps in the Bearpaw River area, recalled Al Wright got a mail contract to deliver mail by airplane. For Percy that was the end of the well-used trails. After that his family continued to go out by boat from Nenana in fall but had to snowshoe back

to town with snow up to their waists (Duyck 1980). Travel along the trails had diminished and they had to break trail, whereas before they had waited for the mail carriers with their large dog teams to do it.

The roadhouse keepers weren't very happy, either. They depended upon the overland travellers for their livelihood. With airplanes, many of the stopping places weren't needed. The people employed at the roadhouses also felt the effects; no longer were large quantities of dry fish necessary to feed the dog teams, and there were fewer opportunities for wage labor in their home areas. Some villagers must have experienced a type of isolation very similar to life before the turn of the century.

The development of air service is closely tied to the establishment of support services in the way of airstrips and communication sites. As noted, a major airstrip was built at McGrath about 1942 and the site increased in importance as the "air cross-roads of west central Alaska." Jefford (1981:76) wrote: "Since the community was right on the river, the fuel suppliers were able to barge in large stockpiles of aviation gasoline. Plentiful gas coupled with its central location made McGrath a good checkpoint and refueling stop for bush flyers."

The site of Farewell on the South Fork of the Kuskokwim was built in the early 1940s by the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA) as a communications site. Fuel for this site was transported by tractor from Pitka Fork where presumably it had been barged up the Kuskokwim (Brown 1980:85). The building and maintenance of this site may not have provided economic opportunities for the upper Kuskokwim people because it was out of the area they were then using and a considerable distance from the villages of Nikolai and Telida. However, at least one Nikolai resident, Bobby Esai, worked in the early war years freighting oil up the river and overland to Farewell. It may well be that further research can provide evidence other Natives also shared in this economic flurry.

Another CAA site was established at Lake Minchumina in 1941-42. Long before then , old Abbey Doddia, the last permanent resident Athabascan at the lake, had left for Telida and there were but a few white trappers in the area. Athabascans from the Kantishna and Kuskokwim drainages occasionally visited the area but the lake came to play less of a role in their lives and more of a role in the lives of white trappers and CAA employees.

A discussion of the building of the CAA station, and subsequent barging efforts, taken from Gudgel-Holmes (1979), follows:

> In the summer of 1941 the CAA began to build their station and airfield at Lake Minchumina. Two planes, an amphibian and pontoon ship, made a total of eighteen trips bringing

freight to the forty workers at the lake. George Black was also reported to be hauling freight by water that year for the station (Fairbanks News-Miner, July 23, 1941). During the winter a cat train with equipment for the partially completed station ran from Nenana along the winter trail to the lake. There were three or four cats in the train and one fell through the ice at the lake, but was later recovered. The next summer, fuel for the new station was barged from Nenana, up the Kantishna and Muddy Rivers. Two "J" boats, about twenty-five feet long and twelve to sixteen feet wide, were used. One pushed while the other pulled the barge that was between them. According to Warren Lindsay, a former FAA river transportation employee, the boats pushed the barges up-river to beyond Roosevelt where they then switched places and pulled them, using birch trees tied to the barges' rear corners for better control up the tortuous Muddy River. Three or four trips were made per season bringing in fuel and other heavy equipment until 1954. Among the operators of the boats were Einer and Emil Hansen, brothers to the Hansen of John Hansen Lake fame. The Hansens were experienced rivermen who displayed much skill in maneuvering their crafts on the tight corners of the Muddy River. At times, reports Dick Collins of Lake Minchumina, the boats would be brushing the outside banks of the river while the barge would be up against the inside bank, yet the Hansens' coordination and cooperation (which did not extend to their land activities) were so expert they did not have to back up and fill in around the corners. There were a few times during the years of barging when the freight had to be double tripped at shallow spots on the Kantishna. Part of the cargo would be unloaded, the boat would proceed over the shallow spot, deposit its remaining freight and return for the first load.

In 1954 a PT boat that had been used in barging fuel to the Bettles station was taken off that run and used for Minchumina. This larger and more powerful boat was able to push a barge twice as big as the "J" boats and much faster also. The usual ten to twelve day trip was reduced to three. The "J" boat operators predicted the PT boat would not be able to navigate the route to the lake, but the water was high that year and several trips were made before the close of the season (Dick Collins 1979, personal communication). The next year the FAA awarded their barging operations to YuTana Barge Lines of Nenana, but before the first run was made, it was discovered the fuel could be flown in cheaper than it could be barged. Thereafter, until the FAA shut down the station in 1969, planes were used to bring fuel to Minchumina.

One of the first people to work at the Lake Minchumina site was Kenny Granroth, an old-timer who is still living there and is a

Plate 1. The Hansen brothers, John, Einar and Emil -- trapped the Kantishna River area at Roosevelt from 1916 to 1950 and worked on the Nenana to Lake Minchumina river boats. Natives of Denmark. Fabian Cary Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

source for much of the history reported in this document. Jimmy Sims (1980), who now lives on the Parks Highway, also recalled his experiences working on the barges with the C&A Navigation Company. He and the Hansen brothers were only a few of the many Kantishna River area residents who combined summer employment with winter trapping. This pattern of seasonal employment was common even before the CAA station was built, as gold seekers augmented their prospecting with trapping, especially in the marginal to poor gravels of the Kantishna and upper Kuskokwim (J. Brooks 1982; Dice 1912:69). Today this pattern still occurs in communities in and near the north additions of Denali. Some people still combine winter trapping with seasonal employment, often having to leave home for 3-5 months for employment. The seasonal pattern is reversed in Kantishna where most miners and lodge operators work during the summer but leave the area in winter. A major difference today, compared with the early days, is that now there are other forms of gaining a livelihood besides trapping and mining. Now among subsistence users of Denali there are also a number of retired people, while in a few areas some subsistence users have full time jobs and others seasonal jobs in construction, guiding and community development projects such as airfield and school maintenance.

The airplane not only revolutionized transportation systems and employment potentials but also provided easier access to trapping areas for some trappers. Tom and Mary Flood (1980), residents of Lake Minchumina, noted that Fabian Carey used an airplane for access and to supply his trapline cabins, in the 1950s and probably earlier. Since that time, this method of access has continued to varying degrees among some trappers, especially those who reside primarily at Lake Minchumina, Nenana and Fairbanks.

The Development of Big Game Guiding

Across the state, one of the most important applications of the airplane has been its use in big game guiding operations. The airplane permits the guide to quickly get his clients into and out of camps, thus increasing the number of clients that can be served in a given season. The airplane is also used to spot game and greatly facilitates the transport of trophies and meat.

A few Natives at Nikolai have been involved in guiding as assistant guides, packers and (perhaps) as guides. Philip Esai (1980), who lives in Nikolai, noted that Bob Curtis started guiding in 1956 and that was when the villagers started working for guides. Mishka Deaphon (1981) said that guiding started in the 1940s on the northwest flank of Denali. To the best of our knowledge, none of the operations involving residents of Nikolai or Telida are or were within what are now the Park or Preserve boundaries.

On the northeast flank, the tradition of trophy hunting goes back to the time before the airplanes and is linked with people like Charles Sheldon, a game hunter and advocate for the establishment of Mount McKinley National Park. In 1907-08 Sheldon and Harry Karstens wintered over in a cabin along the upper Toklat River. A sports hunter, Sheldon became concerned about the amount of game that was taken to supply the mining camps, drawing it appears, a distinction between sport hunting which he advocated and large scale meat hunting which he saw as detrimental to the health of species. Sheldon used his influence to establish Mount McKinley National Park, a feat that was accomplished in 1917 (Nash 1981:11-12, Boone and Crockett Club 1925).

Harry Karstens and Jack Hayden assisted Sheldon in exploring and hunting the area. Karstens was an expert on the Denali area, having carried the mail by dog sled between Fairbanks and Kantishna. He was a member of the first party to reach the highest point on Mount McKinley and served as the park's first superintendent (Stuck 1914a, Pearson 1957). Probably no one would have made a better guide in the area than Karstens. Scull (1914) commented:

> Inquiries about the game of the neighborhood all led back to Harry Karstens. When one tried to locate a person in this (Fairbanks), as in other towns, the answer frequently was, "You'll find him at the Northern, or the Palace, or one of the other bars." But not so with Karstens: "You'll probably find him at Hall's bookstore ..." For a congenial companion Karstens was willing, if he had leisure, to undertake a trip to the head of the Toklat River ... although he did not make a business of acting as a guide.

Jack Hayden worked as a cowboy in Texas, stage driver in Colorado, dog driver and miner in the Klondike and trapper and hunting guide in the Yukon (Auer 1916). It is not known if he engaged in other guiding type activities in the Denali area beyond his one trip with Sheldon and Karstens.

Stephen Foster and his partner, Nels Henderson, reported to the Fairbanks Daily Times (July 11, 1914) that they intended to extend their Lake Minchumina fur farm and trading post activities to include big game guiding. Stuck (1915) mentioned that Foster was making a 13' wide trail with well-equipped cabins to Mount Foraker and had plans for a great resort. Stuck did not think Foster had the right connections to get the wealthy eastern patrons that it would take to make a successful operation. It appears they were not very successful, but Foster's most valued contribution lies in the numerous photographs he took of the Kantishna drainage and its inhabitants in the 1910s and 1920s. Foster also was a game warden, perhaps the first in the upper Kuskokwim-upper

Plate 2. Stephen Foster and Chief Deaphon of Telida. Stephen Foster Collection. Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Plate 3. Slim Avery, trapped from 1918 to 1950 in the Kantishna and Lower Tanana Rivers and Lake Minchumina areas. Shown with George Hilary on right. Fabian Carey Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Kantishna area. In 1919 he seized eight Dall sheep from meat hunters at "Pinkstone's old cabin" on the East Fork of the Kuskokwim River (Foster n.d.: photograph 69-92-316).

Other early residents of the Denali area who did some guiding were John Calvin and Carl Anderson (Mercer 1983). Calvin trapped and hunted meat during the Alaska Railroad work and did a bit of guiding in the northeastern portion of Denali and also east of the Nenana River. One of his cabins (bought and still used by Mercer), is on Sunday Creek near the Savage River, next to the original Mount Mckinley National Park boundary (Mercer 1983). Calvin was one of the first persons to settle in the Healy area, having poled a raft up the Nenana River with two other men in 1903 (Usibelli Coal Miner 1983:A9). Anderson homesteaded in the Healy area in the 1920s, trapped north of McKinley Park and did a little guiding and packing for hunters and tourists. He made some trips to the Wonder Lake area and all the way to Rainy Pass although most of his game guiding was in the Wood River area east of Denali (Mercer 1983, Hall 1945).

Guiding and packing were just occasional jobs in the early days before good bush airplanes, like the Supercub, came into use after World War II. Most guides normally worked as trappers, market hunters, miners and prospectors or whatever else was currently available. Beech (1931:63) described one of the guides on his 1925 trip across the north flank: "Jim Burrows was assistant to Gibson (head packer). He was formerly Game Warden for the Kantishna ... Burrows came into the country as a prospector, had developed into the proprietor of a music and gambling hall, drifted from place to place as the various strikes were made, and, I imagine, as a last resort got the appointment as Game Warden of the Kantishna."

Another local woodsman Beech used in his 1925 trip was Slim Avery. Beech (1931:64-5) said of Avery:

> Slim Avery was also competent and efficient. He had formerly been a cowpuncher in Wyoming and had drifted into Alaska about fifteen years earlier, where he had prospected, trapped and traveled generally through the country and had been making a success. He was proud of the fact that he had never worked for anybody since he had been in the country, except two days when he helped out the government on railroad construction. I believe he took charge of its pack outfit until a new head packer was secured. Besides Avery's knowledge of horses, which was far beyond the ordinary, he was dog musher and had done a good deal of mushing in the winter carrying mail and supplies. He had traveled the range and prospected up to within a short distance of the West fork of the Foraker at a time when only one or two men had penetrated further than that point.

> I brought Avery along in case we lost the outfit and had to pack out in the snow. The dog mushers there use their sleds, equipped with steel runners, over the tundra in summer, making pretty nearly as good time as on the snow, although the dogs are not able to haul as heavy a load. Three or four hundred pounds is about maximum that a seven or nine dog team will haul in this way. Avery had seven dogs with him. He was about six feet three in height, and we called him Skyline Slim as he always traveled the skyline. (See also Temblay (1983:163) for a humorous story about Slim Avery and Slim Carlson.)

Many of the early-day guides did not live in the area but were brought in for specific trips. Thus Andy Simons, the famous Kenai Peninsula guide, was engaged by Beech (1931:64) as head guide in his 1925 trip from McKinley Station on the railroad, across the park, and into the upper Tonzona River country. Simons had some experience in the Rainy Pass area but apparently none on the north flank of Denali.

Opportunities for guiding in the Denali area were few prior to aircraft access. Trips involved long horse journeys from the head of navigation on rivers such as the Kantishna or from the railroad after it was completed. Thus it was not until well after World War II that regular outfitters and guide services for hunting became established. For Denali's north flank these were in the Alaska Range west of Mount McKinley National Park, and in the Kantishna Hills, along the Stampede Trail area and down at the Toklat Springs area.

Development of Federal, State and Private Interests

The Alaska Statehood Act of 1959 and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) are often viewed as the impetus for the mosaic of management patterns which now determine the course of Alaska land management. To some extent this may be true but, on closer examination, land management has deeper roots that go back to the distant past when the respective cultural groups adjusted their yearly cycles, trading patterns, and ceremonial gatherings to accommodate immediate needs, the pressures of other groups, and a steady array of changing opportunities. Fluctuations in game species, weather conditions, and the decisions of neighboring groups are but some of the factors that influenced decisions at the individual and group level. These traditional land management practices included many facets, among which were friends/relatives, enemies, the cultural responsibility of sharing, trading relationships, and seasonal game movements. Large communal projects, such as caribou fences, required management for their construction, upkeep, and use. All these aspects of land and resource use involved decisions from among a group of people who had an attachment to the area and who had to live with the consequences of their acts. Now forces outside the group, with

different kinds of direct attachments to the land, also influence management decisions.

Successful adaptation depended upon securing the right land base for hunting particular species and the right locations for acquiring fish. The advent of a fur trapping economy and the arrival of white miners and trappers placed additional pressures on particular areas and territories, pressures which were reflected in competition by middlemen to acquire furs for trade, then by trappers and fishermen to establish and maintain traplines and fish camps for their extended families' continual use (see Hosley 1966a:67). In time, western legal means were employed by non-Natives and some Natives. The "informal" or customary law ways still remain important but, over the years, the introductions of "formal" agreements have also been incorporated into the strategy of villagers and newcomers who wish to establish themselves in the country. For instance, traplines were bought and sold by some people, and homesteads and allotments were filed. From the beginning, prospectors recognized the value of filing their claims. Both the "formal" and "informal" agreements operate to determine rights of access, use, and exclusion of others.

The establishment of Mount McKinley National Park in 1917 and then statehood in 1959 signaled a new level of governmental presence on the north flank. The acts establishing these entities were promulgated under the premise that the land was to be managed not only for local residents but for all citizens of the state and of the country. The implications of this management have become increasingly important in recent years as other land management legislation has emerged, but the basic premise that the lands are to be managed for <u>all</u> citizens has meant that management decisions are made not only at the local level but also in regional, state, and national centers.

ANCSA also reflects the multiple constituencies that have emerged. The Native regional and village corporations represent stockholders, some who have strong ties to the area, others who do not.

Formal management proceeds at each level - the national, state, regional and local level - and each level proceeds at a different rate of speed. But, in each case, the constituency of interested participants has grown geometrically while the land base has remained constant - a perspective that naturally leads to conflict and is easily lost as overlays of maps are prepared in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau and Washington, D. C.

Living on the land, the one value that has persisted throughout the history of the north flank, is threatened by a "piece and parcel" approach to land management. Living on the land demands access to large areas and a flexibility to adjust to changes in animal populations and environmental processes. These dynamics, which used to be such keen factors in the

strategy of local residents, are more and more being placed in the hands of outsiders who are charged with the inherent conflict of managing for everybody.

We turn now to some of those conflicts and discuss the implications from the standpoint of our observations of local dynamics.

TRAPPING

"Who gets to use a particular piece of public land in Alaska for trapping?" This question has not been controlled by formal laws or structured allocation systems. Instead, arrangements and customs have developed over time at the local level. How trappers in parts of the north additions to Denali National Park and Preserve work out land use arrangements is discussed in this section.

By far the greatest use of the north additions is made by people living at Lake Minchumina with traplines emanating out from there. Some of the lines date back at least sixty years and have their own life history. Currently, Minchumina trappers routinely combine a winter of trapping with some form of seasonal wage labor or supplemental income.

Traplines are passed on free or sold (sometimes for only a token fee) or traded from individual to individual and sometimes auctioned off through probate court. While there is discussion about what is being purchased or acquired, it is generally assumed that the arrangements guarantee use of traplines and cabins along the way. While some trappers have a bill of sale for the cabins, traps, and related gear, there is never any official legal guarantee that extends to the actual public land where the trapping occurs. Instead, the trapping system survives on the basis of formal and informal agreements between individuals.

By the fall of 1980, there were signs that things were going to change. One Lake Minchumina trapper had left his trapline in 1978 with the establishment of Denali National Monument and established another farther north. The move was due to his concern that the Monument status might interrupt his trapping activities. Other trappers whose lines extend into the park chose to work closely with the National Park Service (NPS) to document areas used, their patterns of use and their plans for rebuilding cabins. Some of these families feel that the new legislation and their activities are not only compatible, but may protect their subsistence uses in the face of an increasing population in the area. The legislation brought some changes in land and resource management objectives.

By the fall of 1981, additional changes were evident. Large blocks of land near the Park were being transferred from

federal to state and Native corporation ownership. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) classified a large segment of land to the north and west of the park/preserve as open to settlement and mineral leasing. The State conducted land disposals at Lake Minchumina and was proposing opening state lands to mineral leasing on the north and west boundaries of the park. A private land owner was making lots available for purchase at Lake Minchumina. Despite the new mosaic of land managers, and the increased number of people with interests at the lake, the traditional trapline use system still determines who uses which areas. Two families new to the area moved in during the summer of 1981 and began trapping in the fall in the preserve. The dynamics behind how they got access to trapping areas is instructive. One family acquired state land and has built a house. The man has his own plane and has become a partner with an older, well-established Lake Minchumina trapper who can use the assistance. The main trapline cabin is usually reached and stocked by airplane since it is reported to be a particularly difficult trip to bring supplies in by snow machine. From the main cabin he uses a dog team to run the line.

In the second case, a young family acquired state land and started living on it. They purchased part of one old-timer's line and at least part of a second man's line. In discussing their purchase from the old-timer they said, "He paid for it and we'll pay for it" - by which they meant the camps, trails and traps. By implication they also indicated their recognition that there is nothing that legally says they must purchase anything - particularly since the old-timer may never get out there again to check who is using the line, but they did pay for it and so perpetuate the system.

This young family was offered a cabin for a year so they decided to live there and build the next year, eliminating for a year the need to use a trail for which they had acquired special use provisions from still another trapper.

In a third case, a young trapper spent some time in the area a few years ago looking for a trapline. He was not able to find unclaimed terrritory or make other arrangements so he moved out.

To summarize, in the first case, the trapping partnership provided a customary avenue for the young newcomer and the old-timer to trap. In the second case, the newcomers have been able to purchase rights to trap and have worked out the distances between where they live and where they can trap. In the third case, suitable unused trapping area apparently was not available nor were opportunities for a new partnership, so the newcomer was not able to establish a line and left to seek out another area. We watch with interest how these arrangements work out and are reminded that this local level of land management is dependent upon flexibility.

In yet another recent case (not involving Minchumina people), trappers had harsh words and even a shoving match over a section of trapline. They tried to get the NPS to settle the issue, but the NPS told them to try working it out first. Although they now realize that part of their disagreement is due to misunderstanding, they have not been able to completely resolve their differences. Government agencies do not want to step in, preferring to let them work out their problem. However, if park resources appear to suffer from overtrapping or other factors, managers will be legally required to act.

Flexibility to maneuver makes the trapping system work, a factor that is quite evident in beaver trapping, where individual trappers must watch a number of beaver houses in different lakes and decide each year where they are going to make sets - which means they may have numerous ways of travelling from lake to lake within the areas where they have recognized rights to trap. In a heavily used prime beaver trapping area, such as the Muddy River flats in the past, it becomes very difficult to determine where one person's areas ends and another's begins. Set locations may be marked by cut branches or by a trail, but not always, and the trappers themselves may be continually negotiating these questions with each other. In those cases, each person may be seeking as informal and flexible an arrangement as possible - waiting to see about the resource, their personal circumstances, and the other's needs.

Personal agreements and flexibility, the hallmarks of the trapping system, are threatened by increased numbers of users and the expressed desire of government managers for clear-cut guidelines which can be applied impartially in each case to fulfill legislated objectives.

When Richard Bishop (1978) conducted his subsistence research, he recorded existing traplines and trails. Those traplines still exist but they are often identified with more than one trapper and arrangements are frequently made to acquire sections of a line.

For instance, one trapline in the north addition was once owned by an old-timer who had a bill of sale from a man who came into the country about 1918. The line is now used by a family who acquired it from three different sources. Part of the line they got from the family that decided to re-establish outside the area when it became parkland. Another part they got from a man who acquired his part from the old-timer in payment of a debt. The third section was acquired directly from the old-timer who gave it to the family for taking care of him in his old age. There is ample evidence to indicate that these dynamics are quite common but with increased numbers of people desiring to trap, it will become more difficult for trappers to establish new and maintain old lines.

There appears to be increased discussion of when a line has been abandoned and is open for someone else to come in and use it. Some trappers say that use of a line remains with a person until he dies or disposes of it. Others say that after five years without use it is open. These questions are kindling that help to fire trapping disputes. A case in point is the Muddy River flats. One man who had extensive interests in the area spent a number of years working on the railroad but intended to return. When another man used the area, a conflict developed. The concentration of resources, increase in trappers, and the old question of when an area is open provide the natural ingredients for trouble.

A related question concerns buffer zones between lines to ensure that trappers don't infringe upon the fur bearers sought by others or that an area will be overharvested. Some trappers say that five miles should separate lines; others say ten miles. We suspect these questions will increase in importance as more people move to the land and as federal and state managers are asked to settle disputes, set standards and to make determinations on when a trapline has been abandoned. Additional questions include the necessary buffer zone between traplines or how local personal agreements get considered in decisions about who can use a trapline. An increased need for standards is probably inevitable as more people move in, but it is striking that questions leading in this direction are emerging from the local level. It is difficult to determine how much we have influenced discussions by our questions. It is significant that the system of trapline transfer has maintained itself, to a large extent, up to the present time. Newcomers to trapping have generally elected to follow the "old code of ethics" of purchasing a line rather than just starting to use an area. With few deviations, this manner of acquiring a line has been followed by trappers to this day in Denali, unlike some other areas where conflicts between established trappers and newcomers seem more prevelant (for example, see Shinkwin and Case 1984:84, 113-114).

During the course of our discussions of trapping with people using the North additions, we found most of the lines mapped by Bishop (1978) still were used. In addition, we mapped some areas in the eastern portion of the additions that Bishop had not covered. Finally, we mapped lines used by people from Nikolai, although it turned out that none of these extended into the park or preserve additions (see also Bishop 1978:57). These maps are in the park files.

We also determined who used which lines at the time of our interviews and in some cases we obtained information on trappers in recent years who no longer use the area. Approximately 20 individuals have been trapping in the North additions in the past few years.

Other Subsistence Concerns

The Muddy River flats is a favored moose hunting area for Lake Minchumina residents due to boat access. It is an area vulnerable to overhunting if too many fly-in hunters or new residents begin to use the area. Disputes over who has trapping rights in the flats have occurred in the past and contributed to overharvest of beaver (Bishop 1978:13,99-100). Lake Minchumina and Telida trappers complained to us of past fly-in trappers who hit beaver very hard when prices were high. Wickstrom (1967) surveyed east and southeast of Lake Minchumina and reported: "...nearly every lake large enough for a Supercub ski operation has tracks around the beaver lodges."

Fishing in Lake Minchumina could become a problem if there is an influx of many new homesite owners who are interested in the resource. At present it does not seem to be a problem, although fish are not as abundant as in former years. During the days of the dog teams and fur farms in the 1920s-1930s the lake was said to be "fished out" (Hendrickson 1982, White 1934). Little or no fishing occurs in Lone Star Lake now, but that area has been used before and could come under pressure again (see discussion of Sprucefish/Lonestar).

Obtaining good logs for cabin building is a problem at Lake Minchumina. Firewood cutting is rarely a problem at present but with the anticipation of new homesites this is a concern of residents.

In the past, residents of Nikolai and Telida have hunted on the northwest flanks of the Alaska Range for sheep and caribou. This has not been the case in recent decades but it does represent an area where they have ties and they have expressed concern that they be able to use those areas in the future if the opportunity arises. Some of the villagers from Nikolai are involved in guiding activities in this area; however, as far as we can determine, their activities do not extend into the park or preserve. Their continued ability to use those areas for hunting are assured since sport hunting and trapping are allowed in the preserve and subsistence harvests are allowed in the park additions.

Some Nenana residents with ties to the areas drained by the Toklat and Kantishna Rivers are concerned with how those lands are managed. Much of their ancestral grounds are now owned by the State or the Native Regional Corporation. The possibilities of widespread land disposals for agriculture, homesites and other developments could impact traditional uses of the areas. The portions of those areas within the park or preserve are being managed primarily for natural biological systems perpetuation and subsistence uses, so there should be little change from traditional activities. In addition, the known Native village sites and cemeteries in the park and preserve are or likely will be on Native-owned lands.

IMPORTANT PLACES: HISTORICAL AND PRESENT

The following are arranged alphabetically. The location of many of these use sites are shown on the maps in the beginning of this report. Many places need additional documentation, both from interviewing knowledgeable people and by on-site surveys. Many sites, mostly cabin ruins are not described here because we could not find any information about their history. We have no doubt that places presently unknown will also be found.

Bear Cabin

This is a cabin built by Leonard Menke, north of Castle Rocks. He named it Bear Cabin because every time he went there he saw grizzly bear tracks (Menke 1981).

Bearpaw Village

Bearpaw, a village site and cemetery located at the mouth of the Bearpaw River, is an historic Native camp (Andrews 1977:406). This site may be the Native camp "Anotoktilon" described by Wickersham (1938:255, 308). One of the major attractions of this site is the availability of fish; salmon spawn in a slough there (Duyck 1980). This may be the place referenced by Hudson Stuck (1914b:137) when he refers to "the fish camp on the Bearpaw." Bearpaw also is known for good moose and caribou hunting (Duyck 1980). David Esau (1980) remembered going to the Bearpaw for muskrat hunting. They went up the river as far as Diamond. In the fall of 1941, a Finn, Gus Hargle, and one or two Native families were living at Bearpaw. They had homegrown potatoes and salmon (Brooks 1982).

Percy Duyck (1980) related that his mother was raised at the mouth of the Bearpaw and her father died there. The site is associated with John James and his wife Sara, who Percy remembers being there when he was a boy.

The Bearpaw area continues to be used by Percy and his sons who trap there. Percy's family lived in that area but he was gone for some years working on the railroad, except for periodic brief trapping trips. Now he is retired and his sons trap there and the family hunts moose there.

Birch Cabin

Birch Cabin was built by Leonard and Hazel Menke in 1967 on the Muddy River on Hazel Menke's Native allotment. The cabin was built out of birch logs because there was no spruce there, thus the name "Birch Cabin" (Menke 1981). This cabin is not to be

confused with the Birch Creek cabins of Slim Carlson and Tom Green. The Menkes have trapped the Muddy River flats area for 15 years and continue to do so (Menke 1981).

Birch Creek

Slim Carlson built a cabin less than 1/4-mile below the junction of Birch Creek and Hot Slough on the east bank of Birch Creek. Slim built the cabin there because of the good fishing (Menke 1981). This was Slim's headquarters cabin (Green 1980). It is no longer useable.

A second cabin is located about 1/2-mile up Birch Creek. This cabin was built by Tom Green in 1972 and he sold it to Julie and Miki Collins (F. Collins 1981, Green 1980).

Birch Creek Village and Roosevelt John's Native Allotment

The area at the mouth of Birch Creek has a long history of Native occupation. Abbie Joseph (1982) recalled her years there as a child and related how they always missed the familiar hills locally called "Roosevelt Hills" near the creek when they were off hunting or fishing in other areas. It was not uncommon for them to build houses in other hunting areas, and Abbie reported that Roosevelt John always built houses wherever he went. There are pictures of Roosevelt and his relatives in 1919 at Lake Minchumina in front of cabins which Abbie identified as Roosevelt's and his brother Andrew's (Foster, n.d.)

Prehistoric remains at Birch Creek existed in the earlier part of this century, as reported by Abbie and confirmed in 1982 by personnel from the Cooperative Park Studies Unit of the National Park Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs for ANCSA section 14 (h) 1 studies (BIA 1984).

In Athabascan the site is "Nitsoo Taaleechaakk'at" (variation "Nutchitalichaket") meaning "mouth of Birch Creek." Birch Creek Village and cemetery are in two components, one on each side of Birch Creek. The site on the southwest side has several graves and structural remains that appear to be a cabin, potlatch house, caches and an excavated or semisubterranean dwelling. Some of the graves are surrounded by wooden board balustrades and board crosses of Russian Orthodox style with three crossbars. Graves typical of the Episcopal Church are also in evidence. The Russian Orthodox influence was likely from the Kuskokwim drainage and the Episcopal from the Tanana drainage. This mix of religious influences is an indication of the cultural ties Birch Creek people had with both river systems.

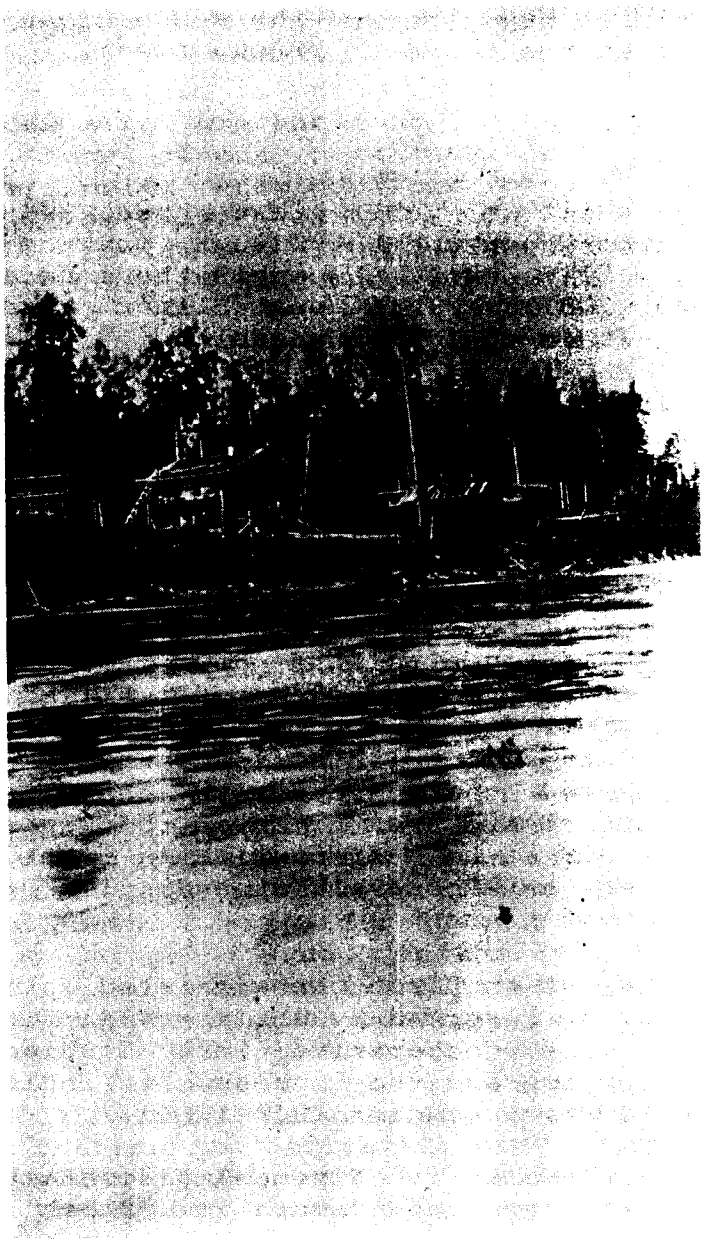

Plate 4. Birch Creek Village, in 1918, near the junction of Birch Creek and the Muddy River. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

On the northeast bank of Birch Creek is "Starr's Place," the Native allotment owned by the Elizabeth and Alfred Starr family and originally Roosevelt John's. Apparently, it was once the main village site. There are presently two cabins, one quite large, and a cache.

The Birch Creek site is important in the history of the Athabascan people and has been nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The southwest site has been selected by Doyon, Ltd. for a Native cemetery site.

Birch Creek was a populous place in February 1915, when Hudson Stuck stayed overnight on his way to Iditarod. He wrote in his diary that 24 people were at the village, perhaps all sleeping in the unstable two-story cabin that shook whenever the door was closed (Stuck 1915b). However, the people may have gathered there, especially for Stuck's visits or for a potlatch, since Hosley 1966b:170) stated that in the 1900-1910 period Birch Creek Village was severely decimated by flu. In the later 1910s, Steven Foster photographed Birch Creek Village at which time a large two-story cabin was standing (Foster n. d. #69-92-86). Percy Duyck (1980) recalled that when he was a small boy he went to Birch Creek several times and found people from Tanana there. Percy's family would go to Birch Creek for potlatches from their home on the Bearpaw River.

According to Eli Charlie (1983) of Nenana and Lee Edwin (1983) of Tanana, in the spring of 1923 nearly all of the Birch Creek residents and those visiting from Coschaket for muskrat hunting died after a local flu epidemic. Eli and Lee recalled their efforts to bury the dead at Birch Creek and remove others for burial at Coschaket.

Roosevelt John, one of the last Natives to live permanently on the Kantishna River, was reputed to be a medicine man, had a nose ornament and often wore skin clothing after other Natives had switched to store clothing (Mahanay 1983). He may have run a roadhouse at Birch Creek (Starr 1980). Although the Birch Creek roadhouse is not included on the Nenana to Flat mail trail list (Kusko Times Jan. 3, 1925), it may have started later or only run intermittently. Testimony by Roosevelt and his witnesses for his allotment all mention a small cabin about 150 feet from the main house that was commonly known as the place where visitors and travellers stayed. This then may be the roadhouse that is referred to (BLM Native Allotment File FO2624). Brandt (1943:27) described stopping in 1924 at a Native roadhouse on the Kantishna River between Roosevelt and Lake Minchumina. He described it as "a simple log cabin with a sign reading 'Roahouse' on it." No other possible roadhouse sites are known in that area, so it likely was Roosevelt John's.

Plate 5. Natives at Lake Minchumina, April 12, 1919. Top left to right: unknown, Roosevelt John, wife Emily, Carl Sesui, unknown, unknown. Bottom left to right: John and Abbie Evan and children, Hellen, unknown. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

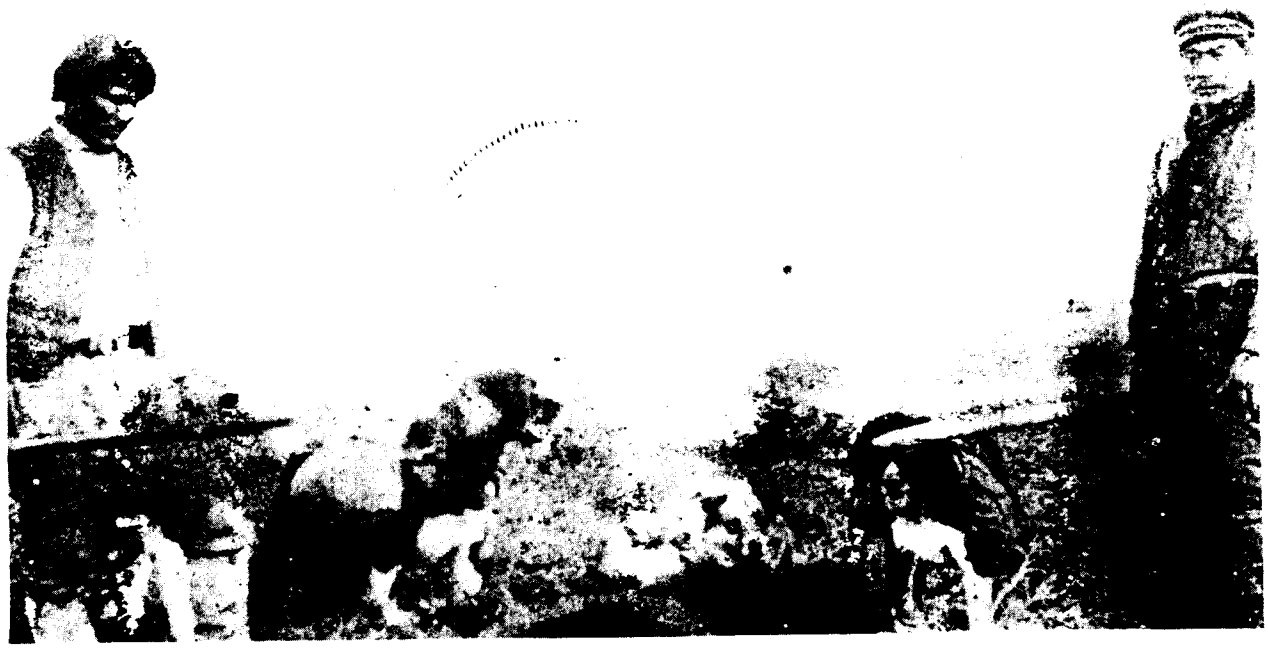

Plate 6. Roosevelt John (left) and John Evan standing over a grizzly bear they killed with spears in the Lake Minchumina area. Fabian Carey Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Roosevelt John eventually got a Native allotment at Birch Creek, across the river from the old Birch Creek cemetery. He applied for the allotment in 1932, at which time he stated he was born on the land, as were his parents and grandfather. In the mid-1920s, Roosevelt made improvements on the land so that by 1938 the site contained several cabins, large and small, a smokehouse, dog barn and kennels, fish racks, fishwheel and garden. The garden appears to have first been planted in 1934, according to Roosevelt's testimony. Witnesses for Roosevelt's allotment stated he had been on the land for as long as they had known him, which went back to about 1922. Roosevelt himself stated he had always lived there since 1917, except during several months each winter when he would go to his hunting and trapping grounds. His trapline, of undisclosed location, contained three cabins which he built himself. The witnesses, Lauritz Olsen and Emil Hansen, also reported Roosevelt would spend part of the winter at what was referred to as the winter camp, but would make frequent trips back to his main residence. Roosevelt John was in the Foraker River - Whitefish Lake area in April and May 1927 (Giles 1927). Possibly one of his cabins or camps was in that area. Roosevelt's wife and children were also reported to have always been on the land and this is verified by Abbie Joseph (1982), who was the mother of Roosevelt's second wife, Martha, and his adopted daughter, Lizzie.

Abbie was born in the Birch Creek area in the 1890s and lived there and at Minchumina and Telida until the death of her husband, John Evan, in 1920. At that time Roosevelt John adopted Abbie's daughters, Martha and Elizabeth (later Alfred Starr's wife). These girls were actually Roosevelt's nieces because Abbie's father, Chief Peter, was a brother to Roosevelt. Peter was chief in 1909 and remained so until his death in 1913 (Starr 1980, Foster n. d., Stuck 1915). Roosevelt's first wife, Emily, was also a sister to Abbie's husband, John Evan of Coschaket. In about 1930-32 Roosevelt married Martha after Emily's death, and they appear to have had two boys who were aged 8 and 4 in 1938 (Native Allotment file no. F002624). Jim Brooks, a trapper on the lower Kantishna River, met Roosevelt John and his family at Christmas in 1941 when they passed his camp on their way to Nenana or Minto for the usual Christmas potlatch festivities (Brooks 1982). Shortly thereafter, Martha and the boys must have died, as Roosevelt had no one to care for him when he died in the spring of 1944 (possibly 1945) (Starr 1980, Granroth 1980). He was buried at the Birch Creek Cemetery. At the time Roosevelt was discovered dying, Elizabeth and Alfred Starr and family came to Birch Creek and remained there some years until the children had to go to school; at that time they moved to Nenana where the family remains today. The Native allotment legally passed to Lizzie and her heirs who continue to seasonally use it for trapping. It is now commonly referred to as Starr's place. The Birch Creek area is now part of a Native allotment, Native

Groups selection and Regional selection for historic cemetery sites.

The Birch Creek site is strategically located near the Muddy Lakes, a prime area for muskrat, beaver, otter, mink and moose. In the old days, people from as far away as Tanana would come here for hunting in the spring (Starr 1980). Now, this area is one of the favored places for Lake Minchumina people to trap and hunt. It is also an area where there have been conflicts and potential for conflict continues, particularly if there is an increase in the number of users. At the present time, there appear to be delicately worked out understandings between the local users but it also appears clear that the area is used to its maximum.

Carlson Creek Cabin

Slim Carlson had a cabin in the original Mount McKinley National Park at high elevation, around 2500 feet. Beach (1931:73) said it was west of Clearwater Creek, east of the Muddy River and possibly along Carlson Creek. Berle Mercer (1981) found cabin remains in that area, in the uppermost scattered timber. We found that site in 1983 but could not confirm it was Slim's. A few logs, nails, files and large pot were all that were visible. Pearson (1962:103), however, said Slim's cabin was on Clearwater Creek and described it as having more than one cache. We found cabin ruins with either 2 caches or a cache and another building on Clearwater Creek just below the mouth of Carlson Creek. There were at least 6 doghouses and Pearson (1962:103) said Slim had 9 dogs. There was also a heavy horse-drawn sled with 2 1/2-inch wide runners. Slim wasn't known to use horses but this site could have been used by others after he abandoned it to move towards Lake Minchumina to trap (Pearson 1962:103).

Carlson Lake Cabin

This cabin, situated at the north end of the lake, was built by Slim Carlson (F. Collins 1980). The area was previously occupied prehistorically, as evidenced by lithic material found around the cabin by C. Holmes in 1980. It is a small line cabin in poor condition.

Castle Rocks Lake

Castle Rocks is a rock formation resembling a castle. An adjoining lake which bears the name Castle Rocks Lake provides airplane access to the site. Leonard Menke, who has trapped there, noted that the site is a good place for caribou because the wind blows the ground clear of snow, exposing feed for the animals.

Plate 7. Hjalmar "Slim" Carlson, trapped in the McKinley River, Birch Creek and Lake Minchumina areas 1919-1975. Fabian Carey Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Plate 8. Carl Hult, trapped the Kantishna River, Lake Minchumina and Lower Yukon River areas 1924-1964. Fabian Carey Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

There is a pile of ruins near the lake which may have been Carl Hult's old cabin. When Menke started trapping there, he was not able to use that structure because of its poor condition. Therefore, he and Val Blackburn built another cabin, farther back (Menke 1980). Three wickiups were located on the ridge overlooking the Castle Rocks Lake (Menke 1980). Carey (n.d.,b) described wickiups as looking "....like an oversize pup tent built with poles." He noted that few trappers built wickiups and then only where timber was scrubby and cabin logs were not available. Poles were leaned against a ridge pole to form an A-frame and the ends closed by poles. Moss and dirt were shoveled on the steep roof and a small doorway sawn out, as well as a stovepipe hole.

Leonard Menke reported that this part of the line had overflow and lots of hills which make it difficult for snowmachines. He used a dog team to trap but usually flew into the lake. The Jack Hayden family, recent partners with Menke's, started to use the cabin for trapping in 1981-82, flying in and using dogs on the line.

The known history of the Castle Rocks line may go back to 1906 when Clarence Boatman (and possibly Frank Giles with him) came into the area. Tremblay (1983:26) reported that Boatman and Giles were the first non-Natives in the Foraker River area and came as partners. Carey (n.d., b) said that Boatman alone came into the area first (see White Creek for more on Boatman). According to Tremblay (1983:26), Boatman sold out to Carl Hult about 1940 and Hult sold a portion to Fabian Carey and later a portion to Val Blackburn. In 1950, Tremblay bought the portion that Hult was still trapping on, with his headquarters cabin at Castle Rocks Lake. How Tremblay bought that area from Hult is delightfully told, and a sketch map drawn by Hult of the lines and cabins is shown, in Tremblay (1983:23-30). Tremblay never was able to find some of the cabins or line segments during his three seasons in the area. One line, called the 12-mile line, was used by Cal Lensink in 1953 for his graduate studies on marten. When Tremblay left the area in 1953, he sold his lines to Val Blackburn. The short segment from Castle Rocks east to the 25 Mile cabin became Val's in 1950 when Tremblay swapped it for a sled. Leonard Menke then obtained his lines from Blackburn. In 1969 Menke sold 1/3 interest in his trapline and cabins in the area to Fabian Carey for a nominal $1.00. These included the Castle Rocks cabin, Bear cabin, Herron River cabin and Snohomish cabin (Bill of Sale, Carey Family).

A different version of the area's trapline history from the 1920s to the late 1930s comes from Leonard Menke (1983). He understood that Giles had the Castle Rocks traplines in the 1920s and after his death in 1933 Yoder got the area. Al Bartlett got the lines from Yoder and Hult got them from Bartlett. Making the history of the area even more confusing is the Probate Court record for the Kantishna Precinct which

states that Giles' (spelled Jiles in the record) "Minchumina Road House and Equipment and Trap Line and Equipment" were sold to James Sillib for $525.25 after Giles' death. It is possible this line is not the Castle Rocks line. Since trapping partnerships often are very fluid and changeable and segments of traplines are often exchanged, both versions of the Castle Rocks traplines history may be valid; they may each just refer to different portions of the area.

Other names that appear associated with the early use of the area are Jim Anderson and Nels Stole. According to a note of Val Blackburn (F. Collins 1983), Anderson died in the area in 1920.

There was a "mail box" on the Herron River near Castle Rocks where the trappers would leave notes for each other (Tremblay 1982). Tremblay (1983) described with humor and in detail what a trapper's life was like in this area in the early 1950s.

Chitsia (Heart) Mountain

Chitsia Mountain is a prominent feature between the Toklat and Bearpaw Rivers. Resembling the point of a moose heart, the mountain was given the Athabascan name Chitsia, which means heart (Wickersham 1938:239) and specifically moose heart to Native hunters (Peterson 1980), although Jette (1926) thought it might have meant iron or dung.

When Native people were living at Toklat Village, 12 Mile Camp and other villages in the Kantishna drainage, Chitsia Mountain was a favored spot to hunt sheep, moose and caribou. Celia Peterson (1980) recalled that people would go there by dog team to hunt. Hank Ketzler's mother-in-law also told about hunting moose at Chitsia Mountain (H. Ketzler 1980; see also 12 Mile Camp). In the fall of 1941, Brooks (1982) saw the McKinley caribou herd passing by here.

No sheep are found at Chitsia Mountain now or in fact anywhere in the Kantishna Hills. Mary Hansen, now of Delta Junction, who mined with her husband, Mr. Morris, on Crooked Creek from 1929 to 1933 stated that miners would get their sheep meat when the sheep would come out of the park over to Moonlight Creek. The rangers always accused the miners of chasing the sheep over the boundary before killing them in legal territory (Hansen 1982). In the late 1920s rangers reported (Deke and Bill 1933:185,187) that sheep were present just outside the park boundary in the headwaters of Clearwater Fork and Moose Creek. During that era many sheep died from starvation due to deep and crusted snow conditions (Murie 1944), so perhaps some moved to the Kantishna Hills in search of food.

Carl Hult trapped and hunted the Chitsia Mountain area. Hult came to Alaska after rum running got too hot (Tremblay 1983:26) and came to the Kantishna River country in 1929 after trapping in the Nabesna and upper Tanana areas and became a partner with Johnny Folger in 1929 (Carey n.d., b). They had a main cabin on the Kantishna River about 25 miles west of Chitsia Mountain and used a trapline trail toward Chitsia that had been cut by Carl Nigel, who came in 1912 and was the first white man to stay in that area (Carey n.d.,b). Like many trappers, Hult also did some prospecting. The Kantishna District Land Records (August 4, 1931, Vol. 2:113) show him having located 20 acres of placer ground on Caribou Creek. Folger died in 1931 and by the late 1930s Hult had taken Fabian Carey as his partner. They left the Kantishna River-Chitsia Mountain area for the Castle Rocks Lake area after a few years.

Cottonwood Cabin

The Cottonwood cabin is about 10 miles south of Cottonwood Hills and is thought to have been built by Frank Giles in 1924. Giles had a long trapline in the area in the 1920s (Giles 1924, Menke 1981). It has not been visited, so its condition is unknown.

Diamond

The General vicinity of Diamond was evidently used by Natives who also frequented the Minchumina region (Andrews 1977: 390, site MGR 46). Percy Duyck (1982) described a burial site a few miles north of Diamond and east of the Bearpaw River where victims of a flu outbreak in the 1920s are buried, including his father's first wife.

Diamond was a gold rush town at the junction of Moose Creek and the Bearpaw River near the head of navigation on the Bearpaw, a tributary of the Kantishna River. It was built as a supply town at the time of the 1905 gold rush to Kantishna (Capps 1919:336) and had a post office in 1906 (Ricks cited in Orth 1967). Navigation upstream from Diamond to Glacier, another mining town, was reported in 1907 to be limited to boats drawing no more than two feet of water (Sheldon 1930:90). Supplies bound for the Kantishna mining district were hauled overland from Diamond by sled in winter (Wells 1931:336). After completion of the railroad, Diamond may have enjoyed a rebirth of sorts since the trail from Rex on the railroad to Kantishna passed by there (Bundtzen 1978:155-156, Brandt 1943). The Diamond Roadhouse was used during the dog sled mail runs between Nenana and McGrath.

Various people filed for trading post locations at Diamond, including Charles Ingersoll in 1913 and N. B. Henderson and partner in 1915 (items 1702 and 1896 in Kantishna Recording

District). In 1923, Lauritz C. Olsen occupied the land and built and ran a roadhouse until 1930 when trail traffic ceased. He also built a small store and 60 doghouses, and from former owners received a warehouse, horse barn, dog harness drying barn and fish smokehouse (BLM file 2627). Olsen also ran a post office from 1929 to 1951 (Ricks cited in Orth 1967). He remained at Diamond until the 1950s (Coghill 1983). Olsen may have come to the area as early as 1913, according to testimony for Ingersoll's 1913 trading post application, as witnessed by "C. Olsen." In 1919 he was in the area as he witnessed Roosevelt John's Native allotment application at Birch Creek. Olsen mined on Caribou Creek during the summers of 1936 to 1939. In 1941, Olsen received a patent to 15 acres at Diamond. The 1920s rush of prospectors was rather short-lived, so Olsen may have relied on trading with trappers such as Charley Griess, the Hansen Brothers, "Applenose Allen" (Coghill 1983), Slim Carlson and Natives from the Bearpaw Village area. Apparently traders were empowered to sell territorial hunting and trapping licenses, for game warden Sam White mentioned that on December 18, 1932 Slim Carlson paid Olsen $100.00 for Alien License #959 (White 1932).

One long log structure still stands today and it receives some use by trappers. The 15 patented acres are now privately owned.

Fairbanks to Moose Creek Trail

The gold strikes in the Fairbanks area stimulated prospecting activities in the Tanana Valley and beyond. In 1905 the discovery of gold at Kantishna brought prospectors in fair numbers to the new district. Unlike Fairbanks, which is located along a major river, transportation to the Kantishna was difficult in summer and winter. Supplies generally came from Fairbanks (Capps 1918). In summer the goods were transported by boat on the Tanana, Kantishna and Bearpaw Rivers. In winter, Capps (1918:283) noted:

> "The customary route followed the Tanana River down to the mouth of the Nenana, ascended that stream to the base of the foothills a distance of 20 miles, and thence proceeded westward along the base of the foothills to Knight's Roadhouse on Toklat River, north of Chitsia Mountain. The trail then followed up the Toklat and its tributary Clearwater Fork to Myrtle Creek, up Myrtle Creek and across a low divide to Spruce Creek and down that stream and Moose Creek to the mines on Moose Creek and its tributaries. The total distance by this route from Fairbanks to Moose Creek at the mouth of Eureka Creek is about 165 miles."

Fish Lake

Fish Lake plays a prominent role in the long history of the Fish Lake-Cottonwood Hills trapline. The line was probably cut by Frank Giles as early as 1923 (Giles 1926). Giles had a camp at the lake and in 1927 built a cabin, cache and doghouse near the birch-covered hill (Giles 1927). There is some confusion about the names Fish Lake and Whitefish Lake. Local people refer to the Fish Lake shown on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps as Whitefish Lake, but Giles (1927, 1930, 1931) always referred to one of his main trapping cabin locations as being on Fish Lake. The only two times he mentions Whitefish Lake he seems to indicate it may be a different lake than Fish Lake (Giles 1930, 1931). On the other hand, he might have started using the term Whitefish instead of Fish Lake as time went on. Giles met his death near the lake in the spring of 1933 after apparently falling through the ice with two beaver on his pack. The beavers and body were mostly consumed by animals. The remains were found in the fall by other trappers concerned as to Giles' whereabouts. His main cabin was reported to be at Whitefish Lake (Fairbanks Daily News Miner, November 17, 1933).

The line most likely passed to Giles' partner Jesse Yoder and then possibly to Jim Sillib before Al Bartlett acquired it (Granroth 1981). Carl Hult then obtained a large trapping area in 1939 which included the Whitefish line (Tremblay 1982). Whitey Mattonen appears to have briefly had the line in 1946-47 before selling it to Val Blackburn in 1947. A map exists which was drawn and signed by Mattonen in October of that year and may constitute part of the sale. The map includes three separate drawings of different scales of the area south of Lake Minchumina to Cottonwood Hills (Blackburn 1981). Walt Parker stated that Mattonen didn't use that area and therefore it is questionable how he could have drawn the map.

We found inscriptions on the walls of the cabin that read: "Whitefish Lake Val Blackburn," "property of Val Blackburn 1947," "June 1, 1943, 200 marten Carl Hult." (June 1 is long after marten trapping. Locals say Hult sometimes trapped out of season and some joker may have written the date as a dig at Hult.)

Foraker Cabins

Bishop (1978) shows two Foraker cabins. The northern one is on a small lake. Leonard Menke bought it from Al Bartlett about 1956. Slim Avery built it in the late 1930s and sold it to Bartlett for $100.00. Al Willis used it frequently from 1953 on. The southern cabin Menke built in 1953 (Menke 1981). At that time he began using the Castle Rocks area to the Foraker, after obtaining the "12 Mile" line and one from Castle Rocks.

Several cabins were built in the vicinity at this time by Menke and many new lines were cut and connected (Menke 1981).

Foraker Trail

Foraker Trail is reported to be an old Indian trail up the east side of the Foraker River (Bishop 1978: map; Rand McNally 1922: map). Kenny Granroth (1981) recalled Alfred Starr telling him about large numbers of beaver up the Foraker River and Birch Creek. He told Kenny how they used to go up to hunt, then float down in their canoes. Leonard Menke (1981) reported that Al Bartlett told him the trail is worn down where the Indians walked up. Carl Seaui told Leonard that he remembered going up there to hunt sheep and caribou in the summer and returning in skin boats in the fall.

Geese House

The Geese House (also called the Duck or Rock House), is a rock formation site on a ridge north of Chilchukabena Lake, which is of considerable interest to those people who grew up on the Kantishna and its tributaries. It is approximately 75′ long, 30′ wide and 20-30′ deep and is like a rectangular room without a roof. An origin story is associated with the site, and people are cautioned that if they take anything from the site they will get sick (H.Ketzler 1980). A Raven story is also associated with this place. It states that Raven was having his feathers painted and was being very particular about how he wanted it done. So, they got mad at Raven and threw all the black paint on him. That is why he is all black today (H.Ketzler 1980). Alfred Starr (1980) told how the rock formations near Geese House were important during a war with the people on the Toklat. By hiding at the site, a group was able to save themselves from being killed.

Upon request from Doyon Ltd., archeologists Craig Davis and Charles Holmes identified the location of the Geese House in 1981 and confirmed it with pictures from Thomas Albert. The older photos came from Julius Betts (Bettes?)(Ketzler 1980). A joint venture of National Park Service and Doyon representatives and former Kantishna River residents made a trip to the site in August, 1982 (Doyon Ltd. 1982:20-21).

Glacier City

Glacier City was started as a mining supply town at the time of the 1905 gold rush to the Kantishna (Capps 1919:17). At least one store, owned by a Mr. Hamilton, was in operation that first year (Nome Semi-Weekly Nugget, March 1, 1906). Unlike many of the other towns which were quickly abandoned after the rush,

Plate 9. Glacier City, with claim recorder's office and home, March 1, 1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Glacier continued to be used. This probably was because of its strategic position along the trails to other towns. S. R. Capps (1918) noted Glacier was used by miners as a winter camp because it was close to the mines and timber for fuel was readily available.

In recent years, some of the buildings have been used by trappers and other people wintering over. Dan Ashbrook uses one of the buildings for overnighting when he is running his trapline (Ashbrook 1980).

Presently, a number of structures still stand and the layout of the town is easily observed. An historic Holt tractor was at the site. It was moved in 1983 to the Alaska Historical and Transportation Museum in Palmer on temporary loan from the National Park Service. For more Glacier City information, see Brown et al. 1982.

Herron River Cabin

Leonard Menke built this cabin in 1965 and he cut the trail to Live Trap Lake in 1953 and 1954 (Menke 1981).

Hot Slough Cabin

Jim Sims is reported to have built this cabin. It has now deteriorated and fallen in. The upper Hot Slough area is considered dangerous for winter travel because of snow covering thin ice which creates wet conditions (Menke 1981).

In the 1950s, Sims used a line that ran from Yutokh Hill along the east side of the Foraker River to the spot where the river comes close to Birch Creek. At that spot, which was noted for its dangerous overflows, he turned around. He acquired his line from Al Bartlett (Sims 1982).

Igloo Creek Cabin

This cabin was built by Slim Carlson. It is a small line cabin used by the Collinses in emergencies while running their trapline (M. & J. Collins 1983).

This Igloo Creek is located near Lake Minchumina and should not be confused with Igloo Creek near Sable Mountain on the Denali National Park road.

John Hansen Lake

This lake is named after John Hansen who had a fox farm there. Part of an old wheel from a horse-drawn wagon was found at the

site, making one wonder about the extent of historic activities (Duyck 1980),

The other Hansen brothers, Emil and Einer, also trapped there and operated "J" boats for the FAA on the Kantishna River in the 1950s (and probably 1940s) (Lindsay 1982). Emil was present in the area in 1914, according to his statement as a witness for Roosevelt John's Native allotment. All three men are in a 1917 photograph at "Square Deal - Rosevelt" (Carey n.d., a). The brothers were from Denmark.

From 1963 onward, Julia and Hal Waugh used the lake in their guiding business. They had a verbal agreement with Val Blackburn for this use, since Val had been trapping the area after the Hansens died. Money passed between Val and the Waughs and Julia reported it was to purchase rights to the place. Julia applied for a headquarter site in 1973. After much inquiry and documentation of use, Julia appears to be receiving ownership (BLM H/Q site file F10309). Recently, Miles Martin has been living and trapping in the area (Martin 1983).

Kantishna

Whether spurred on by Judge Wickersham's maps and tales of gold (Wickersham 1938:269, 320) or stirred by reports from Joe Quigley and Jack Horn, two prospectors who found paying quantities in Glacier Creek (Capps 1918), two facts are clear. Gold was discovered, and there was a rush to what is now referred to as the Kantishna area to stake claims. Only two years after the Fairbanks strike, the Kantishna offered hope to those who followed the trail of gold. But, unlike Fairbanks, Kantishna was hard to reach. Fairbanks has the Tanana, a navigable river which flows into the Yukon and eventually the Bering Sea, but Kantishna has no navigable water access; goods bound for the district were hauled at least part of the way overland. When the McKinley Park road was completed, it became the major access route (Wells 1931:336)

No discussion of the Kantishna is complete without at least casual mention of Fannie and Joe Quigley and John Busia, Kantishna miners known throughout the interior. These personalities helped carve the historic character of the district (See Pearson 1947, 1948, 1950; Carson 1970; and Hall 1945).

The interpretive potential of the Kantishna is considerable, but care must be taken to work with local residents in realizing a future that adequately and accurately reflects the past and is compatible with present activities and investments. This is one of the most exciting challenges faced by the NPS and local residents.

For a more detailed discussion of the history and historic resources in the Kantishna area, see Brown et al. 1982 and Bundtzen 1978.

Knight's Roadhouse and Old Village Site (Fish Camp)

Knight's Roadhouse, located along the dog team mail trail from McGrath to Nenana, is conveniently located on the Toklat River at the mouth of the Sushana River and near where the trail splits to Nenana and Rex. The roadhouse served travellers in the early days and is now the Native allotment of Edmund Lord (Lord 1980).

Richard H. Knight, for whom the site is named, filed a homestead location in 1909 "... at what is known as the Toklat Road House" (Kantishna Recording District files page 81, item 1324). The roadhouse must have been built in 1908 or 1909 since Sheldon doesn't mention it from his January 1908 visit to the area. Hudson Stuck referenced the roadhouse (Stuck 1914 a:14) stating: " ... another day of twenty-five miles of flats brought us to Knight's comfortable roadhouse and ranch of the Toklat, a tributary of the Kantishna, the only roadhouse this trail can now support."

Stuck's mention of a ranch may indicate that there was some fur farming at this site. Stuck's observations were made a few years before the mail contract was established and regular mail service was initiated along the route, a development which would bring increased attention to this area for a period of at least eight years. Presumably the route remained popular even after dog team mail delivery was replaced by airplanes. Percy Duyck (1980) described a pattern followed by some people of taking the train from Nenana to Rex and then going in on the trail to Knight's for trapping and mining. This is confirmed by Mary Hanson (1982) who visited Knight's in the early 1930s. She recalls how there were stacks and stacks of whole dog salmon used for dog food that were caught in a late run up the Toklat and then quickly frozen in the cold fall weather. In 1941 Jim Brooks stayed there on his way west to go trapping. Brooks (1982) reports the house was left unlocked for travellers' use. Alfred Starr (1980) related that Knight froze in his sleeping bag and was found on the trail. He apparently was sick and tried to make it into Nenana. No date is given. Probate Court records list Richard Knight's death in 1929. Knight had claims in the Kantishna Hills at one time (Kantishna District mining records).

The site is important to the Lord family and to Percy Duyck; the latter has a long trapline and needs shelter along this segment of the trail. His family has kept a tent in the area for trapping and as a travel stop (Duyck 1980). (See also Toklat Villages and Camps.)

Plate 10. Knight's Road House, fiftytwo miles from Nenana on the Kantishna Trail, February 15, 1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Plate 11. Native village ("Toklat Village") near Knight's Road House, October 10, 1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Knudson's Cabin

The "Trappers Cabin" at mile 132 on the Nenana to McGrath dog sled trail, listed in the Kusko Times, June 15, 1929, may have been the same one described by Brandt (1943:30) as his party's next stop after Lake Minchumina in 1924:

> After crossing a series of beautiful lakes we came upon a trapper's cabin, which was so beautifully situated that we decided to camp. The door was unlocked, although the trapper had gone away; but he had left everything prepared for any traveler who might happen along. A verbatim copy of his sign read as follows:
>
> > THO THE TRAVELING PUBLIK. Make your silw at home. You vil find some grub ind the cabin, and some more ind the chas (cache), take what you wondt, and live hvat silver you tink es rigth. Plase bi carefuld ved fire. Live kendeling under the stove, the es alvays sombody behind you. Sign your name and amaunt of monny you living. Plase be carefuld ved fire.
> >
> > Ed Knudson

A Knudson is mentioned by Beech (1931:78) as prospecting with Giles in 1925 in the Tonzona watershed. Karstens (1924) described Giles and Knutson as "good prospectors," and Whitehead (1984) said Giles' partner was Knutson or Knudson. (Also see Fish Lake.)

The exact location of this cabin has not been determined. A possibility for the location may be at Lake Snohomish (see Bishop 1978: map), since that would fit in with the mileages between roadhouses (see page 26). However, that does not seem to fit Brandt's description of "crossing a series of beautiful lakes" before reaching the cabin.

Lake Minchumina

While the present population of the Lake Minchumina area consists predominately of whites, there is an historic and prehistoric record of use by Athabascan Indians and their predecessors.

According to C. E. Holmes (unpublished notes 1982), the archeological record at Lake Minchumina documents 2,500 years of settlement. Numerous archeological sites exist around the lake and nearby area. Investigations began in the 1960s and have continued throughout the 1970s and into the 80s. Extensive work (excavations) has been done at three sites: two at the east end of the lake near White's Roadhouse, and one at the west end of the lake. The earliest occupations are probably related to a late phase of the Northern Archaic

tradition, circa 400 B.C. Evidence of contacts to interior northwestern Alaska (middle Koyukuk River drainage) is found from earliest times in obsidian, a raw material for making stone tools. Copper of natural origin, used to make tools and ornaments, appears in the 9th century A.D. at one site. The origin of native copper is probably to the southeast of Minchumina in the Copper River country, indicating trade or influence from that quarter. Two small villages (8th and 6th century A.D.) contain remains of semisubterranian winter houses that may relate to early interior (boreal forest) adaptations by groups related to the Norton/Ipiutak culture. Later occupation can be related to Athabascan culture.

Some of the old-timers, like Al Bartlett and Kenny Granroth, took a keen interest in the Native history and their observations are incorporated in this report. The Starrs, a Native family now living primarily in Nenana, maintain strong family ties to the region, and Alfred Starr and other former residents have a vast knowledge of local history.

During the latter 1800s and early 1900s, the Native population was depleted by epidemics. Previous to that a fairly large population lived at the lake but was nearly destroyed by a war with Indians from up the Yukon River. After that, the remaining population scattered among the other nearby groups (Joseph 1982). Other Natives used the lake occasionally, such as a group from Nenana fishing for whitefish near the outlet in November 1923 (Whitehead 1984). Among the last Indians to live at Lake Minchumina were old Andrew Evan and his wife Abbey Doodia. Their cabin still stands in back of the house occupied by Kenny Granroth. Old Andrew died of cancer in the 1920s and Abbey sold out to Jim Sillib, a well-travelled prospector. He arrived, so the story is told, having been directed to the lake by Natives who told him it was a good source of whitefish (Granroth 1980).

While it is likely that many prospectors travelled by the lake on their way to or from gold mining camps, those who stayed made their living at trapping and fur farming and seasonal wage labor when it was available (see Bishop 1978). The lake's central location between major drainages made it a natural transportation and communication center and many of the people who settled there worked seasonally at roadhouses, for the CAA/FAA, at barging, or more recently at the BLM firefighting station. The community will probably be remembered historically for its strategic position in the development of transportation and communication, but these are only part of the reasons why people chose to stay there. The primary reasons for settlement were the opportunities the area provided for people to live on the land, trapping, hunting and fishing.

Plate 12. Andrew, a Native, canoeing on Lake Minchumina about 1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Plate 13. Enos Kammisgaard, a trapper and road house owner in the Lake Minchumina-Kantishna River area, 1917-1931. Fabian Carey Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Before 1923, a common route of winter travel from Seward/Cook Inlet to the Upper Kuskokwim was over the Iditarod trail; a rough and arduous trip across the Alaska Range. With the completion of the Alaska Railroad there was an easier alternative (Oswalt 1980). A mail contractor E. Coke Hill (no relation to the Coghills of Nenana who were early settlers) was successful in establishing a winter trail from the railhead at Nenana to McGrath which at times followed an old Native trail, and the Alaska Road Commission made improvements along the trail (Brown 1980). The trail crossed Lake Minchumina and a roadhouse was located east of the lake. This trail remained an important travel route and traffic was reported heavy until the advent of airmail service in the 1930s (Brown 1980:89)

With the advent of aircraft, the FAA and its predecessor the CAA, established communication sites throughout the state; in 1941 they built a station at Lake Minchumina. Kenny Granroth was part of that project. Supplies for the CAA station were barged up the Kantishna River each summer until 1955. Jim Sims was one who worked for C & A Navigation early in the 1940s. He freighted in the summer and trapped in the winter (Sims 1980). According to Dick Collins, who came to the lake to be station manager in 1952 and then retired there, the FAA had their own boats. Among those who worked on the boats were the Hansen brothers, who wintered at Hansen Lake and Roosevelt. Barging on the Kantishna was not an easy job, for low water was a recurrent problem.

When aircraft replaced the barges, the long runway at the lake made it possible to supply the FAA station as well as trappers with their winter outfit. Continued federal involvement was marked by the establishment of a BLM firefighting station at the lake, which provided seasonal employment for some local residents.

The current population spans the years back to the 1940s and by direct association with the previous old timers the oral historical record extends to the 1920s. In one case, that of Abbie Joseph, the record extends directly to before the turn of the century.

Within the last couple of years, state and federal land disposal programs, new federal classifications and private land subdivisions have brought more newcomers to Lake Minchumina. Significant changes are occurring (see discussion of trapping) as the community adjusts to new opportunities and constraints, but many seem to have an earnest desire to continue a way of life that combines living on the land with seasonal wage labor.

Lake Snohomish Cabins

At least two cabins are near Snohomish Lake. The oldest one served as a mail carrier lunch stop. Leo Koegh (1983), one of the last mail carriers in the late 1920s, reported that this cabin was normally not used for overnight stays since it was only a half-day trip between it and the roadhouse at either Lone Star Lake or Lake Minchumina. The door on that cabin was reported to have diaries and observations of travellers (Menke 1980, Granroth 1981). The door was transferred to another cabin in the area, built by Menke and Val Blackburn on a ridge overlooking the lake. Menke (1981) noted that some people claim the new cabin is now haunted, making it difficult to sleep there. Stephen Foster may have built a cabin here for his guiding operation (Foster n.d.).

Giles had a "home" cabin here, one at Cottonwood and one at Eureka (Kantishna) in the 1920s (Giles 1925, 1926). Giles spent time working on mining claims on Copper Mountain (now Mt. Eielson) and in the Purkeypile area and trapping between Lake Snohomish and the Alaska Range. Giles covered an amazing amount of country in a short time as he travelled back and forth by foot or dog sled. On February 13, 1927, he noted that he had 380 traps on 140 miles of trail. Giles cut a trail from Lake Snohomish to the Alaska Range, via Beaver Lake in 1923 (Giles 1926).

Live Trap Lake Cabin

In 1952-53, Cal Lensink conducted a graduate study at this lake with Val Blackburn live-trapping marten, hence the name Live Trap Lake (Lensink 1953, F. Collins 1980, Menke 1980, 1983).

Leonard Menke (1981) stated that he built the cabin at the lake in 1954 and cut a trail to it from Castle Rocks.

Moose Creek Fish Camp

Located approximately 6.4 km upstream from the mouth of Moose Creek on the old Glacier to Diamond trail, this site apparently was where miners, dog sled freighters and trappers (summertime miners) caught and dried salmon.

The earliest record of this site we have found is from 1916 (Capps 1919:plate II). Joe and Fannie Quigley used it (Brooker 1984). Use supposedly occurred at least into the 1940s. Now two cabins and a fish drying building stand, although the roofs are partially fallen in and the creek is cutting into the structures.

Moose Creek Sawmill

Lumber for mining operations in the Kantishna Hills, where trees are small, was cut and milled on lower Moose Creek. A sawmill was operated at Diamond in 1905 (Gudgel-Holmes 1979:96). Whether this equipment was moved to the present Moose Creek site or new equipment later brought in is unknown. A steam engine is labeled Puget Sound Machinery, Seattle, which now is Isaacson Steel. Other items include large circular saw blades, a boiler, stacks of logs and slabs, a well and several collapsed buildings. The Holt tractor (see Glacier City) supposedly was used to power the sawmill at one time.

North Fork Portage and Chief Evan's (Ivan) Camp

The North Fork Portage leading from Lake Minchumina to the North Fork of the Kuskokwim River provides a short overland access between the vast Kuskokwim Basin and the central interior. The portage provides a link from the Kuskokwim River to Lake Minchumina and by extension the Kantishna, Tanana, and Yukon Rivers. Early references to the portage include Herron who described it as an Indian canoe route (Herron 1901:49) and Brooks (1906:86) who said it was "a short portage trail long used by the Natives." The portage was used frequently by Athabascan groups. The Lake Minchumina area served as a meeting ground for individuals from the Tanana and the Upper Kuskokwim. The cosmopolitan nature of this area is witnessed by the communities that were called for potlatches held at the lake and by the personal histories of individual Natives identified with Lake Minchumina. Chief Evan is reported to have had a camp along the portage where it joins the North Fork of the Kuskokwim River (Granroth 1980 from Carl Sesui). Alfred Starr (1980) related how Evan was chief before 1909 in the Lake Minchumina area but then moved to Coschaket and then Chief Peter was chief in the Lake Minchumina-Birch Creek area. Chief Peter died in 1913 (Stuck 1915). It is suspected that Minchumina Evan of Herron's accounts and Minchumina John of Stuck's journal are the same person (Krauss 1982). Stuck used Minchumina John as a guide on at least two trips from Coschaket to Telida in the 1910s and Minshumina John was reported to have had several camps in the North Fork area. Usage in previous times is indicated by the presence of house pits (Granroth 1980).

Prospectors and trappers used the portage in the late 1800s and continue to do so today. Hosley (1966a:48) reported the following account from Native sources:

> In the late 1880's or early 1890's a lone white trapper, according to traditions, ascended the Kuskokwim River to its headwaters in a poling boat, crossed the portage to Lake Minchumina and descended to the Tanana River. This

> ascent of the North Fork by a lone man was considered by the Kolchan to have been a near super-human feat, since the current is comparatively rapid on the upper reaches of the river. A few years later, a group of several white trappers ascended the Kuskokwim by the same route. Of this party, one was allegedly killed somewhere on the upper North Fork of the Kuskokwim, supposedly by raiding Koyukon from the west.

Wickersham (1938:235) met Frank Peterson and Charlie Lundeen descending the Kantishna River in 1903. They had been out over a year, trapping the headwaters of the Kuskokwim drainage and had crossed the portage.

The Gordon brothers crossed from Lake Minchumina to the Kuskokwim in 1907 and met two prospectors headed for the South Fork of the Kuskokwim via the same route (Gordon 1917). A few years later in 1912, the biologist, Dice, used the portage and reported its obvious popularity as evidenced by the numerous ingenious but discarded mechanisms for transporting heavy objects over the ten-mile trail (Dice 1912:94). Bill Burns was a prospector who used the North Fork Portage area in 1916 and whose cabin is still visible along one of the side trails. At the Kuskokwim end of the trail there are at least three trappers' camps dating from the time of Burns to the 1970s. Some of the trappers known to have used those camps are Burns, Jim Sillib, Herman Olson, and Kenny Granroth (Granroth 1980).

Although the portage is generally spoken of as if it were one trail, it actually is comprised of two or more, with various side loops representing the trapping domain of men from sixty years ago to that of the 1980s. One of the two main trails was made by a tractor in 1944 when Kenny Granroth guided the cat for the CAA on a journey to obtain poles for the new station (Granroth, 1980).

Old Woman Creek

On the southern shore, across from the present Lake Minchumina airstrips, is a small creek called Old Woman Creek, one of the few remaining signs of the most recent Native occupation of the lake (see Lake Minchumina). The site is named for two old Athabascan women who stayed there, Abbey Doddia and her niece Helen, aunt and sister of Abbie Joseph (Lind 1983). Hazel and Leonard Menke (1980) said that the remains of the women's caches are still visible. Al Bartlett, who came to Lake Minchumina about 1925, told the Menkes that there were Indians camped over there at that time. Richard Bishop (1978:7) wrote that Alfred Starr recalled from 1907 there was a village at the mouth of Old Woman Creek. Known as a good fishing site, Old Woman Creek was a gathering spot for potlatches. Alfred Starr recalled coming to Old Woman Creek for potlatches when he was a boy (Granroth 1980 from A. Starr). He travelled from the Tanana-Coschaket area. Athabascan groups from the Upper

Kuskokwim also came to Lake Minchumina for potlatching (location at lake not specified) (Stuck 1914b:310). Carl Sesui of Telida would come as a boy to the village at Old Woman Creek where he had relatives (Menke 1981). There is uncertainty over whether ancient village(s) existed on Deep Creek as well as Old Woman Creek.

Native populations of the Upper Kuskokwim River, Lake Minchumina and Kantishna River were severely depleted by epidemics in 1900, 1906, 1919 and 1923 (Stuck 1914a:308 and Peterson 1980). Nevertheless, the Lake Minchumina area continued to be used by the survivors on a seasonal basis for muskrat hunting and beaver trapping until fairly recently (Granroth 1980, 1981). The report of caches at the site and mention of graves (Granroth 1980) indicates that Old Woman Creek has archeological potential.

Purkeypile Mine

The Purkeypile Mine near Little Mountain west of the Swift Fork of the Kuskokwim was developed by Dave Purkey. The family named was shortened from Purkeypile (Menke 1983). His father is reported to have established the mine in 1929 or so, for silver. Dave Purkey has recently sold out (Dick and Florence Collins 1981).

Several prospectors used this area in the 1920s including Frank Giles, Charlie Mespelt, Bob Ellis, and Clyde Wan (Giles 1924).

Around 1927, Fred Whitehead and Bill Knowles were talked into searching for a lost mine in the area by a fellow named Kelly. After paying $600.00 for the food and gear and doing all the searching for three weeks, while Kelly (claiming to be too old for foot travel in such rough country) stayed at Lake Minchumina eating their grub, they realized they "....had been rooked" by Kelly (Whitehead 1984). The legend of a lost mine was still around later, for it appeared in 1947 on a map drawn by Whittey Mattonen which Jonathan Blackburn showed us.

In 1922-23, Fred Whitehead and Billie O'Palka trapped near the Purkeypile area between the Slow Fork of the Kuskokwim and the Tonzona River (Whitehead 1984).

Roosevelt

Roosevelt, a mining supply town built to serve the 1905 gold rush to Kantishna, was located on the Kantishna River ten miles below where the McKinley River enters the Kantishna (Capps 1919:17). An overland trail system connected this river terminus with the mines at Kantishna. While the Kantishna gold

Plate 14. Roosevelt on the Kantishna River just being built in 1906 to serve as a transshipment point for miners and materials going to the Kantishna gold fields. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

rush was rather short-lived, the river terminus at Roosevelt continued to be used for shipping ore for refining until the railroad was built (see Bundtzen 1978:155-156) and a trail from the railroad at Rex to the mining district shortened the travel time.

An observer of the town in 1907 described a dozen log cabins along the bank, one which was two-storied (Gordon 1917:48). Jonathan Blackburn from Lake Minchumina described finding old wagon rims, corduroy road sections, horse harness material and fur farming equipment at Roosevelt. He also reported finding a diary that indicated the original town was a mile or so away and was washed into the river (Blackburn 1980).

The three Hansen brothers (John, Einar and Emil) trapped the Roosevelt area from about 1916 to 1950 or later. In 1939, Emil testified in behalf of Roosevelt John's Native allotment and stated his camp was about 12 miles below (down river) Roosevelt John's. Emil apparently ran a trading post and sold a few staples (Duyck 1980). When the FAA was barging supplies up the Kantishna River to Minchumina in the 1940s to 1954, Emil and Einar, former pole-boat men, operated the "J" boats for the agency (their dates of employment may only have included the later years of freighting, however) (Lindsay 1982).

Walter Minano (1980) said he trapped at Roosevelt in 1954-56. Walter got the line from Emil Hansen. They were working together on the "J" boats for the FAA. Walter then sold the trapline to Val Blackburn. Jonathan Blackburn (1980) got the trapping area from his father Val.

6 and 9 Mile Cabins

The 6 and 9 Mile cabins were so named because they were six and nine miles from the 25 Mile cabin. They may have been built by Jim Sillib because of the fancy doors on them. Sillib acquired the lines (or parts) from Whitefish Lake to Castle Rocks sometime after 1933 after Giles died (Granroth 1981). Carl Hult obtained the line and cabins in 1940, possibly from Al Bartlett. Whitey Mattonen owned the cabins and adjacent lines briefly in about 1946 and sold them as part of a much larger package to Val Blackburn in October 1947. Walt Parker (1981), who lived at Lake Minchumina at that time, could not recall that Mattonen ever used the area of 6 and 9 Mile cabins.

Slim Carlson's Grave

Slim Carlson's grave is located at a lake called Lonely. Slim wanted to be buried in the shadow of Mt. McKinley, so the Collinses chose and named that spot. They had been looking after Slim in his later years. A jar containing his creamated ashes was buried by the lake on a birch knoll with

a birch cross (D. and F. Collins 1981). Slim Carlson lived in the Denali area from about 1919 when he last worked for wages on the Alaska Railroad (Reardon 1956). He trapped, hunted and fished for his living, and possibly did some prospecting in the early days. At 77 years of age, he was the only resident at Lake Minchumina who earned his entire living solely by trapping, hunting and fishing (Holmes 1965:57). Slim had cabins in many places, mostly Slippery and Birch Creeks. In the early days he hunted and prospected in the uppermost drainages of the Alaska Range in Denali National Park, including Clearwater Creek (Pearson 1962:103). Many interesting details about Slim can be found in Reardon (1956), Thiede et al. (1970) and Holmes (1970).

Slippery Creek Cabins

Slim Carlson is reported to have had a cabin up Slippery Creek in the original Mount McKinley National Park that he used for sheep hunting until the park patrols started (Menke 1981). We have not found any signs of it.

About eight miles north of the old park boundary, on Slippery Creek's west bank, is a 10' x 6' cabin in poor shape with "Slim Carlson" on the door and with dates ranging from 1939 to 1965. A doghouse and blazed trails are also present (Johnson 1980). Ray, Julie and Miki Collins built a larger line cabin there in 1982 for trapping. Starting about 1949, Slim had his winter outfit flown into a lake a few miles north of this cabin, the nearest landing spot (Collins 1984). Dick Collins flew Slim's outfit in several times in the 1950s.

Slim had several other cabins on Slippery Creek. They now belong to the Collins family who reported that some of them are not habitable (Collins 1981). Some of these have dates written on the logs ranging from 1939 to 1965, with both Slim's name and Carl Hult's.

The ruins of one cabin near the original boundary of Mount McKinley National Park by Slippery Creek contains much debris, as if it had been used for a long time or was a headquarters cabin. It could have been one of Slim's, but more likely it was William Shannon's. Shannon was a prospector and miner who had claims at the headwaters of Slippery Creek and had a cabin on Slippery Creek just outside the park boundary (Pearson 1941). He may have also trapped, for in 1923 he had at least seven dogs (Karstens 1923, 1924). His skeleton remains were found near his mine in July 1941 (Pearson 1941).

Spirit Lake

Spirit Lake is known for the archeological evidence of past use. Florence Collins and Florence Weber located house pits from the air (F. Collins 1981). Kenny Granroth (1981) observed there are spruce trees growing in the house pits at the lake. He said the rings indicate that the site is over 200 years old. In 1981, archeologist Chuck Holmes visited the lake and identified the site at the outlet of the lake which consists of several house sites. Brief testing of one depression (presumably the one tested earlier by Ed Hosley) revealed prehistoric artifacts and no indication the houses were of the historic period (Holmes 1982).

Al Bartlett is reported to have been at Spirit Lake in April of 1929 obtaining fish for dog teams. Bartlett had an account with Herman Olson who was operating the roadhouse at Lone Star Lake at that time (Granroth 1980).

Sprucefish/Lone Star Lake and Roadhouse

Sprucefish is the name that appears on the maps, but to most people in the area the lake is called Lone Star, a name given by Dorothy Stone in recognition of her husband Bob who came from Texas and trapped from the lake to Spirit Lake in the 1920s (Maakestad 1981).

Lone Star Lake is shallow and fish move out in the fall at freeze up (Menke 1980), making their way eventually into Highpower Creek, a tributary of the Kuskokwim. The abundance and availability of fish in the fall, particularly whitefish, made this an important resource location, a fact which is reflected in the early historic use and present interest of people in the lake and stream.

Mishka Deaphan (1981) noted the site's historic use by Natives of the Upper Kuskokwim, noting that they camped where there were lots of fish, particularly for the old people so they could be secure with a ready source of food. Older people may have camped here while the others were away for fall hunting. Hosley (1966b:97) mentioned Lone Star Lake as a favored caribou hunting area.

In later years, a roadhouse was built on the creek leading from the lake (Deaphan 1981). There is disagreement over who built the roadhouse. Hosley (1966a:65) stated that Natives established it, while Brown (1982) thought Matt Bellin may have built it. Kenny Granroth (1983) believed Bob Stone and Lars Nelsen built it and Stone sold out to Herman Olson. Olson ran the roadhouse in the late 1920s before it closed and summered at Lake Minchumina (Koegh 1983). Perhaps there was more than one roadhouse; or cabin ruins that exist down Lone Star Creek

were used as stopovers before the main roadhouse was built; or various people may have built only portions of the roadhouse complex. In 1982 we found ruins of buildings about a mile below the lake on Lone Star Creek: a small cabin, a two-room cabin which was no doubt the roadhouse, a cache and an outhouse and a dog barn about 60' long with pole stalls still recognizable on each side of the barn. Apparently the dog sled would be driven into the barn, dogs unhitched and placed in stalls and in the morning hitched back up and the sled could drive straight out the other end without having to be turned around. About six miles further downstream are the ruins of another cabin and cache.

Al Bartlett is reported to have fished there for food for his dog teams in the 1920s (Menke 1980, 1981). Fred Milligan, a dog team mail carrier, first reported the roadhouse in November 1923 (Brown 1980:39). The roadhouse closed in 1931 when airplane mail service replaced dog team mail delivery (Bishop 1978:10). Fabian Carey (n.d.,b), while trapping the area, found a notation on the wall of an old mail cabin near Lone Star that read: "April 1931. Last trip with the mail. Airplane has us beat." The jobless roadhouse owner's feelings on airplanes were displayed at Lone Star with this sign seen above the door: "Aviators Trade Not Solicited" (White n.d.). Kenny Granroth used to trap out of Lone Star where he had a tent set up (Granroth 1980, 1981).

While little fishing has occurred in the lake recently, the area is still used for trapping. Lone Star Lake and Highpower to Deep Creek have been fished by Telida villagers in recent years (Gudgel-Holmes 1979:44). Lone Star Lake has been of interest to the Lake Minchumina people. The Collins family fished there a few years ago for a few days, but the catch was too small for the travel involved (D. Collins 1981) and Walt Maakestad (1981) voiced interest in fishing there.

Sushana and Hawk Creek Areas

David Esau (1980) said that he used to go up the Suahana River as far as the canyon (possibly a reference to Dog Ass Canyon, see 12 Mile camp). His grandfather used to hunt there in the fall for moose and caribou. David's father, John Jacob, used to trap near Knight's Roadhouse up Hawk Creek. (We have heard this creek referred to as Hog Creek, but Paul George (1983) said it is Hawk Creek. We do not know the exact location of this creek.) He found gold there but covered it back up (possibly he is the person referenced in the 12 Mile camp gold story). David, recently deceased, was about 11 years old at that time. He was born in 1908, 12 miles above Knight's Roadhouse (Gudgel-Holmes 1977:118). See also Knight's Roadhouse and Old Village Site.

Telida

Telida is located near the limit of small boat navigation on the Swift Fork of the Kuskokwim River and is the closest Kuskokwim drainage village to the Kantishna and Tanana Rivers. The history of Telida reflects the movements, migrations, and developments of a range of cross-regional and cross-cultural ties. Although rooted in the linguistic and religious patterns of the Upper Kuskokwim Athabascans, the people of Telida also shared cultural and social ties with the Tanana drainage people. There is a story which tells how two sisters found Telida Lake and settled there because it was good fishing. One version of the story says the women married two Yukon River Indians, enemies who had killed the rest of the women's group. The other version says the women were from the Kantishna drainage and ended up marrying two of their kinsmen, who were probably in search of survivors of the battle with the Yukon River Indians (Stokes 1983). The Telida people are believed to be descended from these marriages (Oswalt 1980:81, Croft 1950:15). Presumably there was a subsequent movement of Upper Kuskokwim speakers to the village. The presence of the Russian Orthodox church also points to ties from the Kuskokwim. Certainly there were no rigid boundaries between the Upper Kuskokwim and Lake Minchumina areas and people moved back and forth quite comfortably.

The present site of Telida represents the third resettlement of the village. The first site was located on the north bank of the Swift Fork about two miles below the outlet of Telida Creek. The second site was about one mile above the mouth of Telida Creek and the present site is about 10 miles below the outlet of Telida Creek (Oswalt 1980:83).

At Telida 1, called "1899 Telida," one of the most astonishing rescues in Alaskan history was accomplished by Sesui, chief of the Telida Indians. Lieutenant Joseph S. Herron of the U. S. Army led a military party during the summer of 1899 in search of a route across the Alaska Range to the Yukon River at Fort Gibbon, near the present village of Tanana. After crossing Rainy Pass, Herron and his men became lost in the vast stretches of lakes and streams to the north and west of the Alaska Range. They were found by Chief Sesui, and taken to the village of Telida (the "1899 Telida" site, according to LeFebre 1955:56). There they were cared for and then given directions to Fort Gibbon (Wickersham 1938:259). The Telida Indians probably learned about the route to Tanana at potlatches where Tanana and Upper Kuskokwim Athabascans met. Hudson Stuck mentioned such a gathering at Lake Minchumina to which Telida people had been invited (Stuck 1914,b:310). Hosley, who talked with Carl Sesui, said Chief Sesui (Shesoie) had actually been to Tanana several times before (Hosley 1966a:49). The Herron party were in all likelihood among the first white men to visit

Plate 15. Native homes and new Native constructed Russian Church at Telida, March 12, 1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Plate 16. Chief Deaphon (tallest figure) and Telida Natives, March 10,1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

the Upper Kuskokwim, although trading company goods had been available for years at Vinasale (LeFebre 1955-56, Brown 1980:29). Some Telida people, however had travelled to trading posts on the lower river and were exposed to Russian Orthodox Christianity (Spurr 1900:72). The astonishing part of the story is how Herron and his men were found: Wickersham related that Sesui was out hunting, ran across a bear's trail and pursued it. After killing the animal and opening it up, he discovered the bear had been eating bacon which he recognized as white man's food. Backtracking, he followed the bear's trail to a cache left by Herron and his party. He then followed their tracks until he found them "afoot, lost and starving, in the maze of the Kuskokwim marshes" (Wickersham 1938:259). Another version of the story (Carl Sesui to Leonard Menke) tells how Carl Sesui, a young boy at the time, saw either horse tracks or horse droppings from Herron's party and asked about them. Chief Sesui told him that was the white man's dog. They followed the tracks and finally came upon the soldiers (L. Menke related the story in 1980 and 1981).

The Herron rescue story provides a glimpse of life in a remote part of Alaska at a time when there was little direct contact between Natives and whites. It also illustrates that these Natives had a rather sophisticated knowledge of the white man's goods and habits. Chief Sesui's skill in getting Herron's party to Fort Gibbon bears testimony to his abilities and his knowledge of the country.

By 1920 there had been a lot of contact; the Telida Natives had experienced at least three epidemics and were about to receive hundreds of travellers along a trail from Nenana to McGrath. The trail left from the rail line and provided access to the Kuskokwim drainage. After the trail was established, the Kusko Times reported that several hundred travellers visited the village each year and that there was a roadhouse which housed and fed them (Brown 1980:29). A Native-operated roadhouse in 1924 was described by Brandt (1943:311):

> The day's journey of thirty-seven miles brought us to an Indian roadhouse which, we were interested to find, was operated in even better fashion than certain of those back along the line that were presided over by white men. An Indian woman did the cooking, and the food was tasty, consisting of caribou, potatoes, cornbread, strawberry jam, canned peaches, and dried apple sauce. With the appetites we had, it was not difficult at all to enjoy, and in quantities.

This was probably at Telida since Brandt mentioned his party sledded 16 miles the next day to Slow Fork Roadhouse (Brandt 1943:32). The heavy traffic along this route was, however short-lived, for in 1930 with the advent of regular airline service, the roadhouse and village were no longer important for

Plate 17. Carl Sesui and wife at Telida, March 10, 1919. Stephen Foster Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

most travellers. Over the years, the population of the village fluctuated - one family in 1949, three families in 1960, two in 1972 (Oswalt 1980:83) and seven in 1980 (Stickney 1981). Relatives from Nikolai travel back and forth at holidays and other occasions. Hunting and trapping continues to be an economically necessary and culturally important winter activity. At least one trapper from Telida has trapped in the park additions in recent years.

The historic hunting patterns of the Telida and Nikolai villages demonstrate that they travelled to the Alaska Range to get caribou, sheep and moose. The pattern, while not practiced today, is still remembered. Concern is expressed that the land managers know about their history of past use, and that the areas be available to them should the need arise.

Toklat Villages and Camps

The word Toklat (Toclat) is a distortion of the Athabascan phrase "out in the hills" according to Peterson (1980). However, Jette (cited in Wickersham 1938:233) interpreted it as meaning "water source" or "headwaters." We suspect it is used broadly to designate the whole Toklat River drainage. Sites and hunting areas in the Toklat area include Chitsia (Heart) Mountain, Dog Ass Canyon, 12 Mile Camp, Knight's Roadhouse and Toklat Village.

Some confusion exists over the use of the term "Toklat Village," as the U.S.G.S. 1:250,000-scale topographical map of the area labels a site just below the mouth of the Toklat as "Toklat." This is the site of a spring hunting camp of Natives Wickersham (1938:225 and 234) described meeting in 1903. This camp was still used on the regular winter circuit of some Nenana Natives in the 1920s and 30s. They would camp and hunt moose there after having fished for salmon by the Native village near Knight's Roadhouse (George 1983). This latter village was about two miles below Knight's Roadhouse. In the late 19th and early 20th century, it was used in fall to harvest salmon (Andrews 1977:405). The Sushana River enters the Toklat River in this area and it is an important salmon spawning area. There is open water here during winter, likely due to water sinking below the surface in gravels then rising to the surface further downstream, giving rise to the term "Toklat Springs" that is sometimes used for this area. Because of the open water and late salmon run, the area is used by probably the largest concentration of northern-most overwintering mallard ducks. It also supports many bears, wolves, bald and golden eagles and other wildlife during winter (Sheldon 1930, Valkenburg 1974, Alaska Land Use Council 1984).

None of our informants for this area referred to the Native village as "Toklat Village," but that term has been used.

Shinkwin and Case (1984:23 and 26) cited census figures for "Toklat Village" in 1930 and 1940 and show its location as near Knight's.

In January 1908, there were five Native families and three unattached individuals from Lake Minchumina camped at Toklat Village (as we will now refer to it) (Sheldon 1938:283). Percy Duyck (1980) indicated his dad dug graves here at the time of the flu about 1919 or 1923. Celia Peterson (1980) mentioned grave sites here where her niece and nephews are buried. In 1932 nine Native families lived here (BLM Native Allotment file F001791, Henry John). In the early 1930s, Mary (Morris) Hanson, a miner from Crooked Creek in the Kantishna Hills, recalled Native families living near Knight's and the place was referred to as "Fish Camp" (Hanson 1982). According to David Esau (1980), Harrison John made a house in the area. He mentioned that his father, mother and Susie Boatman were there, although it was unclear if they lived there or were visiting. According to Shinkwin and Case (1984:26), 10 families that regularly tent camped here each built cabins one winter; but when they returned the next year, the cabins were too damaged to use because they were built on permafrost. They then returned to tent camping.

The families who lived on the Toklat travelled upstream to the canyons to hunt sheep and other game. Celia Peterson, who used to live on the Toklat, said that they got fish in the fall time up the Toklat, going all the way to the East Fork; they travelled on high ground in fear of flash floods (Peterson 1980). Alfred Starr (1980) noted the area was good for moose and caribou.

There are strong Native historic ties to the Toklat which extend back from today's elders to at least two generations. For instance, Carolyn Ketzler's mother's parents were from there and Celia Peterson's grandmother, Oid Alice Esau, lived in the area (however, she was originally from Cantwell) (C. Ketzler 1980, Peterson 1980). The Toklat people are also mentioned in conjunction with a war (Starr 1980 and see discussion of Geese House).

The Toklat population was heavily affected by the 1920 epidemic; some people were buried at graveyards on the Toklat and others were brought to Nenana by train from Rex. Since then, people have travelled back and forth to the Toklat. For instance, Carolyn Ketzler was raised on the Toklat but her dad worked on the railroad. The whole family went out with him when he went trapping (C. Ketzler 1980). Her husband Hank trapped there and now his sons are using the line. David Easu described how he was born on the Toklat 12 miles above Knight's Roadhouse in 1908. He later went to Tolovanna to cut wood for steamboats and then to Nenana to work on the docks and on the railroad (Easu 1980). For Celia Peterson, the Toklat still

remains an important area, even though she hasn't been there for many years. She recalls the old stories about the place, feels badly that the land has, in her way of thinking, "been taken by the Park Service," and wishes that her family would go out and continue to trap there. (Toklat Village is not in an NPS-managed area, but the historic use patterns extend into areas where the NPS has jurisdiction and subsistence hunting and trapping are allowed.)

Jim Brooks (1982) recalled that one of the two families who lived on the Toklat in the winter of 1940-41 was the Joe Justins. Joe had a fishwheel and Jim bought fish from him for his dog team. During the late salmon run, the fish could be frozen whole by merely laying them on the ground. Joe's wife, now Margaret John, lives in Nenana (1982) and is Carolyn Ketzler's mother.

The story of the Toklat area is all but untold anywhere, but to a number of people in Nenana, and perhaps Minto and Tanana, the area is a homeland. It is alive with history for at least three families and it remains important for current trapping activities and overland access to other areas within the region.

12 Mile Camp

12 Mile Camp, located about 12 miles up the Toklat River from Knight's Roadhouse, is important to Natives who lived along the Toklat River. Hank Ketzler (1980) related that his mother-in-law, Margaret John, tells about this place and there is a story about a medicine man who found gold there. The gold was shaped like Noak's Ark. He put the gold under his pillow but had bad dreams so he went out and reburied it. (See discussion of Sushana and Hawk Creek areas.) Hank's father and mother-in-law also told about a canyon from where they would drive sheep off a ledge. They called it Dog Ass Canyon. His mother-in-law told how they would hunt moose at Chitsia Mountain, a prominent landmark in the area (see also Chitsia Mountain). The exact location of the 12 Mile Camp site has not been found. The Rand McNally map of 1922 (Figure 5) shows a "12 Mile Cabin" west of the Toklat River and east of Chitsia Mountain on the Kantishna-Nenana-Fairbanks winter trail.

25 Mile Cabin

This cabin was probably built by Frank Giles who trapped and prospected in the area from about 1918 to his accidental death while trapping in 1933 (Beach 1931:78; Fairbanks Daily News Miner, November 27, 1933). The cabin was Val Blackburn's from the early 1950s, along with a line that ran east from the cabin toward Castle Rocks. The line was obtained by Val when he traded a sled to Ray Tremblay for it in 1950 (Tremblay 1981).

White Creek

This is a western tributary of the upper Foraker River just east of Castle Rocks Lake. Fabian Carey knew Clarence Boatman and Carey (n.d., b) said the creek was formerly called Boatman Creek. He says Boatman was the first white man to trap the Foraker River country. Born in Missouri in 1866, Boatman enlisted in the U.S. Cavalry in 1882 at Miles City, Montana. His real name was Beauchamp, but his sergeant could not pronounce it so he called him Boatman and that name stuck. After six years in the Army, Boatman began roaming the west as a trapper and miner. In 1898 he went to the Klondike and then to the Tanana River in 1902 to a new strike. He tired of mining and in 1906 took a poling boat up the Kantishna River to Lake Minchumina. There he found several Native families using the area, so he went up the Foraker to the mouth of the stream now named White Creek. He built a cabin and trails and used deadfalls for trapping because steel traps would have been too much weight for his boat. Poling and lining upriver and over riffles, even with the help of his sled dogs, was very difficult on a shallow glacial river like the Foraker. After six years of this difficult living, Boatman settled near the mouth of the Kantishna River. Some of Boatman's lines may possibly later have been used by Giles. Tremblay (1983:26) gave a somewhat different account, stating that Boatman and Giles had been partners and had arrived together (see Castle Rocks Lake).

White's Roadhouse

Located at the beginning of the Muddy River on the eastern end of Lake Minchumina was the residence and mink farm of Reginald White and his family from 1928 to 1934. White came to the lake after learning about it from Knute Lind, one of the resident trappers of that era. The spot was a stopping place for dog team mail carriers and early aviators. It was commonly referred to as White's Roadhouse and was a Pan American Airline station in the early days of Alaskan aviation. The buildings were completed in 1930-31 (Bishop 1978), ironically the year that signalled the end of dog team mail service, heavy overland use of the trail from Nenana to McGrath, and drastic decline in fur prices due to the depression.

Hazel and Leonard Menke (1980) said this was one of the biggest mink farms in the area. The buildings and animal pens are still present, but the property was donated to the University of Alaska in memory of James R. Pike, Jr., a nephew of Mrs White, according to Mr. White's wish in 1962 (Hendrickson 1982).

Plate 18. Clarence Boatman, trapped the Kantishna River country , 1908-1948. He may have been the first nonnative to trap in what is now Denali National Park and Preserve. Fabian Carey Collection, Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

In 1972, an archeological survey by Charles Holmes discovered a large site on the property next to the residence and in future seasons additional sites within the donation were noted but not researched. Information on the first site, gathered over a period of years by Holmes as part of his dissertation material, reveals nearly continuous occupation of the area by prehistoric people spanning about 3,000 years.

A short distance from White's, on the Muddy River, lies the ruins of Enos Kammisgaard's roadhouse. Kimmisgaard was at the Lake Minchumina from 1917 to 1931 and in the 1920s operated a roadhouse and stern-wheeler (Carey n.d.,a; Kusko Times January 24, 1925).

Yutokh Hill (Holek Lake)

Yutokh Hill area was a homesite at Lake Minchumina patented by Joe Holek in about 1944. Joe Holek came to the lake in 1936 (Granroth 1980 and U.S. BLM Homestead file 5671). The site, on a bay of the lake, is protected from heavy winds (F. Collins 1980). According to Florence Collins, the older part of the cabin was built in 1938 and was inhabited by Joe Holek from 1943 through the early 1950s. Then he sold out and Rudy and Bessy Billberg stayed there from 1952-1962. Florence Collins (along with three others) bought the place from Billberg and it is now the site of the Collins family home.

A previous resident at the site was Louis Blackburn, who built the first cabin there in 1929 (General Land Office Records 1944) and had a mink farm. When Blackburn died in Fairbanks in 1932, Andrew Niemie took care of the place and eventually froze to death after being pinned by falling timber from one of the buildings he was working on.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The land and resources of Denali's northern additions have been little changed in historic and contemporary times, except for the Kantishna mining area. There have been fluctuations in the number of people living on the land and the methods they use in subsistence activities, but their types of use and any alteration of the resource base they depend on has not significantly changed. There are fewer Natives born in the area now using the additions than formerly, but those that remain have strong ties to the land. Non-Native use has had minor fluctuations in recent years, after peaks in the 1920s and 1930s.

Use patterns have remained quite constant for several decades. Trapping areas and traplines have stayed fairly constant despite changing hands. Although snow machines and even airplanes are used, some trappers use dog teams and even travel on foot. Although many of the old use sites no longer serve their original purposes, they still receive some use and as such not only fill practical needs but help maintain ties with the past.

Under the provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA), the traditional uses of Denali National Park and Preserve will be protected. (Although what might occur on several thousand acres of private inholdings in the Chilchukabena Lake area and in the Kantishna mining area remains uncertain.) With changing land use patterns adjacent to the park and preserve, due to land disposals and developments, Denali will provide continued opportunity for living lifestyles linked to the past. Traditional low levels of renewable resource use will remain, so that most of the area will continue to be shaped largely by the forces of nature, as intended by ANILCA.

We recommend the following actions be taken to improve the information base required under ANILCA to manage the Denali additions:

1. Continue searching for past users in order to obtain their knowledge of the area. Priority should be given to old-timers. Even during our work we learned too late of the passing of a few before we could interview them.

2. Make further efforts to obtain copies of diaries and other written material.

3. Have an archeologist and historical architect do a thorough site study and detail recordation of all known use sites. They should recommend whether or not to protect and maintain specific sites.

4. Continue discussions with current users to learn more about the area, their uses, concerns, and their ways for solving problems relating to the management of the additions. At least annual visits with these users should be made so that consistent and clear communications are maintained. People are often confused about management policies and regulations or rumors they hear. Many users also want to share with managers information about illegal acts or problems in order to protect the resources they depend on.

5. Keep the park Subsistence Resource Commission established by ANILCA informed about additional use information obtained.

6. Establish wildlife monitoring and resource use research in cooperation with the State of Alaska, as required by ANILCA. Several subsistence users of the additions expressed to us a need for close monitoring of wildlife, especially in the preserve.

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